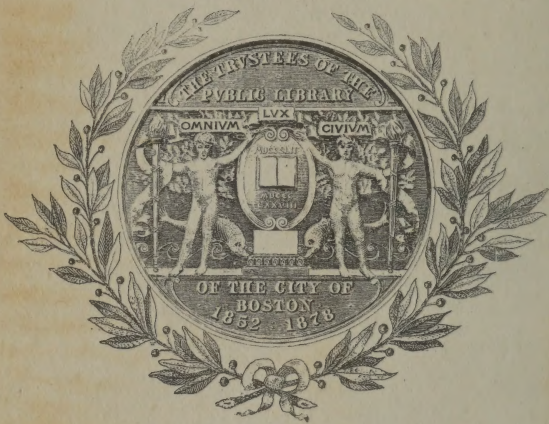


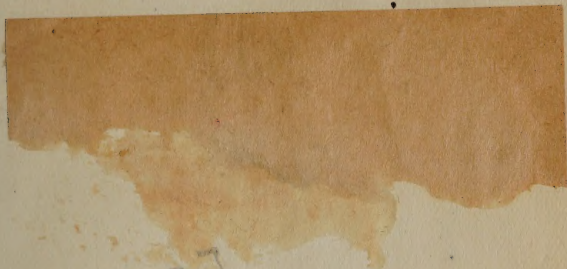
CHOPIN  
THE CHILD & THE LAD

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**CHOPIN**  
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# CHOPIN

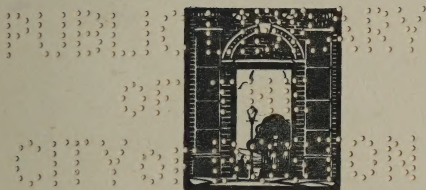
## THE CHILD AND THE LAD

BY

ZOFIA UMIŃSKA

AND

H. E. KENNEDY, B.A.



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“Folk inspiration raised to the power which penetrates and embraces the whole of humanity—raised not by means of outward adaptation or by concessions as to form, but by the interior development of his maturity—that is what Chopin’s Muse permits us to hear as a leading motif for national art.

C. NORWID, “Promethidion.”





## SOURCES

Information obtained personally from WŁADYSŁAW ZELENSKI, the Polish composer, friend of Chopin's favourite pupil, Princess Marcelina Czartoryska.

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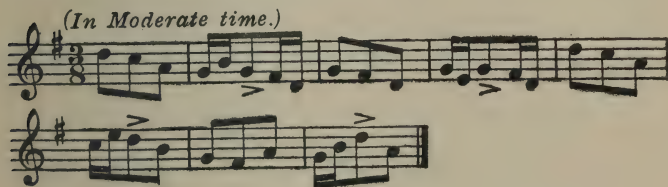
# CHOPIN

## THE CHILD AND THE LAD

### CHAPTER I

A THICK cloak of snow covered the plains of Mazovia—not like the deadly shroud of the far north, but rather a kindly covering that shielded the sprouting winter grain from the touch of the frost. The colours in the landscape, too, were different from those in the realms of snow. The cottages and the leafless trees did not cast indigo shadows, nor did the sun shine like a dull, copper lamp. There was no pink smoke against a light-blue, frozen sky. Nor was there any trace of the tragic beauty of the arctic lands ; it was rather the mischievous, smiling winter of fruitful countries, that only tweaks the nose and paints the cheeks red and urges folk to work in the day and in the evening to dance or to sit by a good fire, telling fantastic and merry tales.

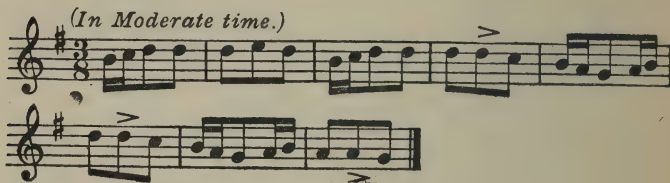
Along a broad road bordered with slender poplars, now leafless and veiled in white, a bright-coloured procession was moving. The women in the carts wore striped dresses of blue, green, yellow and red, with red kerchiefs on their heads, and were wrapped in brilliant shawls. The men wore long, white sheepskin coats. In the front cart were two fiddlers and a double-bass player, accompanying the songs sung by the young men, who had ridden ahead on horseback :—



" Oh, there a cart is going,  
 All painted fair and gleaming.  
 ' Come to the inn, my Mary,  
 As soon as mother's dreaming.'

' Oh, the mother is sleeping—  
 On the hearth no fire is glowing.  
 The inn with dance is creaking  
 As if to fall 'twere going."

The snow creaked under the runners of the carts and from among the golden straw which covered the women in them up to the knees, came the high-pitched voices of women singing:—



" Oh, my little mother  
 Fain I'd wedded be, dear.  
 Hang my neck with corals  
 That all my wealth may see dear.

" Oh my little daughter  
 Dream about the moon, dear !  
 For thy love beloved  
 He will beat thee soon, dear ! "

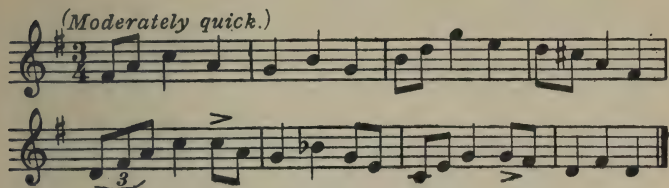
The last rays of the sunset lit up the moving carts as the procession turned into a side road between lines of fantastically shaped willows, that against the fading red of the sky seemed to take the form of witches staggering along ; and the young riders took up the women's song :—

" Oh, my little mother,  
 Nought of that is true, dear.  
 Father, your good husband,  
 Ne'er has beaten you, dear.

You were at the inn, dear,  
 Drinking whiskey roundly.  
 Father went to fetch you  
 And you beat him soundly ! "



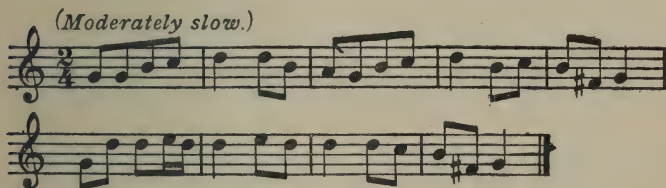
A loud burst of laughter from the women in the carts greeted the end of the song and a rich, clear girl's voice broke forth :—



"Me one day my mother taught  
Not to give my heart for naught.  
Gold must win my heart from me.  
Love's worth naught in poverty.

But Mat taught me twice as good  
In the barnyard as we stood.  
Better hearts that true love hold  
Than a thousand pounds in gold ! "

It was almost already dark when the riders and the carts stopped before a low-roofed, thatched cottage with gleaming windows. From its wide-open door a long stream of red light poured out on the snow and the assembled carts. With it came the sound of stamping feet and fiddle-playing and the smell of beer and whiskey, and a hoarse man's voice roared out from inside the inn :—



" Oh wooing, oh wooing  
My poor purse is wearing.  
My pocket is rueing  
My boots they are tearing.  
My coins they are sounding  
Upon the yew table.  
My boots they are bounding  
As long as they're able."

The riders jumped down from their horses and helped the women out of the carts. With their arrival excitement became fast and furious and around and within the inn merriment and song grew louder and louder.

"Whence ride ye, yeomen?" asked a tall, old man in a sheepskin cap who had come out of the inn at the sound of the arrival.

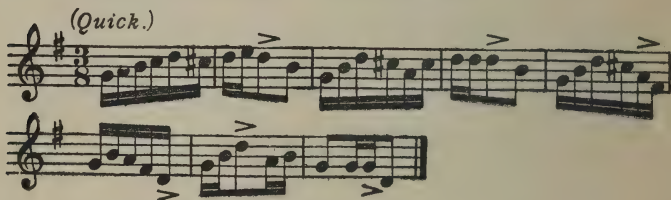
"Why, don't you know us?" answered the oldest of the riders, a comfortable looking farmer in a new white sheepskin coat down to his heels, "We are Brochov folk."

"I see now. May the Lord be praised!"

"Forever and ever, Amen!"

The whole company of new-comers poured into the inn and to the questions showered upon them, answered, "We have come to ask your lady countess to our Marysia's wedding with your Sikora's Jasiiek."

Then the wedding party called for drinks and the dancing, which had stopped for a moment, began again. In honour of the new-comers the fiddlers struck up a quick dance, accompanied with song:—



"Whither ridest, dusty, weary?"

"To seek in Cracow a wife to cheer me."

"Stay thy riding, seek her near thee.

Tap her window, she will hear thee."

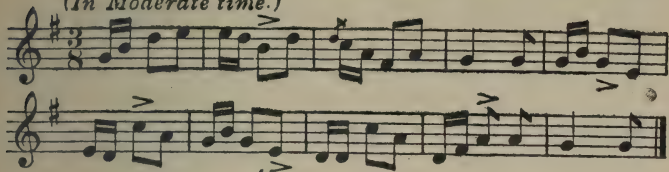
After an hour's dancing and drinking, a stout man, with an important and official air, who was evidently the leader of the wedding party, called out suddenly:—

"Young and old folks, its time to go to the manor!"

"One more dance, Mr. Matchmaker, one more dance!" pleaded a young man with a bunch of ribbons on his shoulder. "Let the best man have one with the bride before we go."

Then the fiddlers struck up again to the mazurka tune :

*(In Moderate time.)*

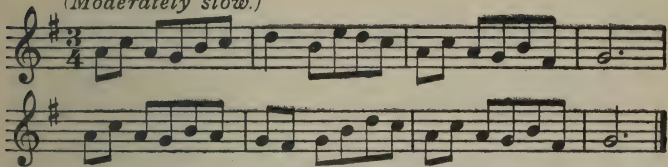


“ Sits a wolf-cub on a hillock  
Wags his tail for pleasure.  
We must find a wife to mind him,  
We must find a wife to bind him—  
This confounded treasure.”

The dance over, a general move was made for the door. Outside the matchmaker formed up the procession, this time on foot. The fiddlers and bass player led the way, then came the father and mother of the bride, followed by those of the bridegroom. Following them walked the chief woman matchmaker with the bride and her bridesmaids and the man matchmaker himself, with the best man and his company.

And so, on the evening of February 22nd, 1810, that peasant company made its way to the manor-house of Zelazova Vola (the Iron Will), to invite all those in residence there to Jasiek and Marysia's wedding. As they came near, the fiddlers struck up the song :—

*(Moderately slow.)*



“ Give her or refuse her, mother dear !  
Give her or refuse her !  
To the squire I'll hie me,  
Kneel, he'll not deny me.  
You'll gain nothing, only lose her.”

Thus they passed through the low gate of the manor and, going up the avenue before the house, with music and song,

under the tall, red firs laden with snow, they came to a stand-still before the porch. The music and song, which had ceased for a moment, burst forth again to call out the lady of the manor, and while it was reaching full chorus, a musical genius, as Polish records state, came into the world in a low-ceiled room in the left annexe of the house.

It was the Chopin family which occupied a little suite of rooms in the long, low annexe of Countess Skarbek's manor-house. Their "flat" was on the right side of the annexe and was separated by a hall from the manor bakery and kitchen. Polish country houses are usually one-storied buildings, but have one, or often two, such annexes, in which visitors' rooms are situated and where some of the members of the family have their quarters.

The Chopins' three rooms had, as was then the habit, beamed ceilings and white-washed walls. They were furnished with solid, old-fashioned mahogany furniture. In the one-windowed front room in which Nicholas Chopin, the new-born baby's father, was wont to sit and study, there were also bookshelves, containing his collection of books, from which he was never willingly separated. The next room, which had two windows, was the largest of all and served as a drawing-room. In one corner of it stood a high-backed clavichord. The third room, which was at the back of the house, had a window looking out on a flower bed, and, further, across the river Utrata (Utrata means "loss"), which flowed almost under the windows of the house.

In the corner of each of these rooms stood a tall, white-washed brick stove, heated with pinewood logs, which, burning, gave forth a smell of resin, that mingled with the scent of rosemary and lavender and dried rose-leaves, with which, according to the prevailing fashion, the sofa cushions were stuffed. White muslin curtains covered the windows and on the broad sills stood fuchsia, pelargonium and geranium plants.

The baby boy was greeted with great joy by the family of three into which he came. That family consisted of Nicholas Chopin, the father, a Lorrainer, who had adopted Poland as his second country, Justine Chopin, its mother,



a Polish lady of gentle birth, and their little daughter, Louise, then three years old. Little Louise was a lively, dark-haired child, resembling her father, but the newborn baby had the fair hair and complexion of Mrs. Justine, whom he strikingly resembled.

Modern research has solved the riddle of Nicholas' attachment to his adopted country. Ferdynand Hoesick, the Polish author of a biography of Fryderyk Chopin, which is based on authentic documents, says that Nicholas was a descendant of a courtier of Stanislas Leszczyński, king of Poland, father of Mary Leszczyńska, queen of Louis XV of France.

When Stanislas, exiled from Poland, was given by his son-in-law the principality of Lorraine, his courtier, Nicholas Szopa, of the town of Kalisz in Great Poland, settled at Nancy and, together with a certain John Kowalski, founded a wine business and called his firm Ferrand et Chopin ("Ferrand" is a translation into French of Kowalski). The grandson of this Nicholas Chopin migrated, according to the records of Nancy, to Poland, and this grandson was, in all probability, Nicholas Chopin, Fryderyk's father.

Some time after his coming to Poland Nicholas, following his natural bent, adopted the career of a teacher, in which he was very successful. His reputation came to the ears of Countess Skarbek, the mother of four children, whose education and the family property were in her sole charge, since her husband, a by no means exemplary one, lived abroad. She needed a tutor who could take part of the burden off her shoulders, who would not only educate but bring up her eldest son Fryderyk, already a boy in his teens; and she found such an one in Nicholas Chopin, who took up his work at her residence, Zelazowa Wola, about the year 1800.

The estate of Zelazowa Wola, on which the Countess lived, is situated about six Polish miles (thirty English miles) south-east of Warsaw, and about four and a half English miles from its county town of Sochaczew. Sochaczew had, in the past, been a place of some importance, as is shown by the ruins of its fifteenth century castle, but at the beginning of the nineteenth century it was nothing

more than the seat of the county authorities and the rendezvous of the neighbouring squires and peasants. Its low, wooden houses, surrounded an extensive unpaved market-place, in which, every Tuesday and Friday, a fair was held. The only building which bore any traces of Sochaczew's past (besides the ruins of the castle) was the church.

Zelazowa Vola lies on the sandy, Mazovian plains, on the edge of the former great Campinos forest. The village was mentioned in all documents of the sixteenth century as already existing. Its situation is a fine one. It occupies the centre of a lovely valley, among low hills, and is surrounded by a wide expanse of fields, sown with different kinds of grain, and framed in forests. Amid these fields winds the river Utrata, which we already know by name.

From the time Nicholas Chopin came to Zelazowa Vola he devoted himself to the education of young Fryderyk Skarbek and his work bore useful fruit. His pupil, the future Polish scholar and writer, could never sufficiently praise the teacher to whom he owed his early progress in education. Here is a passage from Fryderyk Skarbek's memoirs, written when he was professor of economics at Warsaw University :—

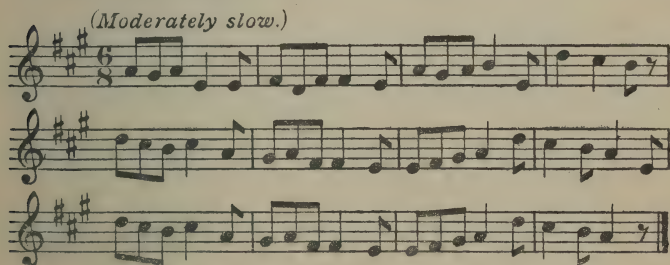
“ It is always decisive in every young man's life, what was the way of thinking of the teacher to whom his education was entrusted and what kind of principles he followed in the education of his pupil. After the one year's stay of my former teacher I had got into a very bad way, since his severity caused in me a lack of confidence in him and secrecy in everything, besides complete revolt against study. The kind and friendly attitude of Mr Chopin towards me, his careful watch over all my actions, without any excessive curtailment of liberty, and his teaching without pedantry or compulsion, directed my capacities and inclinations into their natural channel, from which a bad tutor would have turned them aside.

“ Under this respected teacher, who was all his life my and my family's best friend, I was first inclined towards

learning and, when I passed into the schools, the education I possessed rather consisted of a general development of the mental capacities than a detailed knowledge of learned subjects."

Among the members of the household of Countess Skarbek at Zelazova Vola when Nicholas Chopin came there, was her cousin, Miss Justine Krzyzanovska, who shared the duties of mistress of the house with the countess. She was a pretty, fair-haired girl, sweet, calm and full of charm, with dark blue eyes, straight nose and slightly prominent chin. She was well educated and intelligent, thrifty, practical and modest. She loved poetry and had even no small skill in making it, and was a clever linguist, speaking French so fluently and well that the young tutor, as he became more and more friendly with the Skarbek family, took pleasure in conversing about French literature with her in the long winter evenings in the country. Besides all this, Miss Justine had an inborn love of music and talent for it, inherited from her family, a Polish noble house of modest fortune. She played well on the clavichord and everyone was delighted when, sitting down to the instrument, she struck up a merry tune for dancing. But Nicholas Chopin was most of all drawn to her by her beautiful voice, in which she sang the Polish and French songs of her time.

One evening, when she finished her favourite song, which was most fashionable at the time :—



" Now the moon is down and each "dog" asleep,  
 There's a sound of clapping—I hear it.  
 'Tis my Filon dear, his tryst he keeps,  
 By our maple-tree, standing near it.

I will not plait my flowing hair  
But let it down and tie it,  
Lest I should keep him waiting there—  
Near our maple—standing by it."

and through the open window the moon rays came in with the song of a nightingale as an accompaniment to the music ; Nicholas, who had been previously encouraged by the countess, declared his love for Justine and was accepted.

The engagement was a short one, just long enough to allow of the preparing of the bride's modest hand-embroidered trousseau, and the little home of the young pair, and the marriage took place on June 2nd, 1806, in the parish church of the neighbouring village of Brochov, on the river Bzura, into which the Utrata flows.

It was a time when Prussia had been defeated at Vienna and Berlin was occupied by Napoleon, and a heavy war atmosphere had settled down over Poland. In the part of the country occupied by the Prussians an insurrection broke out. The year 1808 was somewhat quieter, because of the creation of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw by Napoleon out of a part of former Poland, owing to which Warsaw again became a capital and a centre of the life of the country. But in 1809 the storm of war again passed over Poland's fields. The Austrian army began to disturb Zelazova Vola, and, at the same time, young Fryderyk Skarbek, whose home education was finished, went to Paris. Nicholas was, for the time being, teaching the countess' growing daughter, Anna, and a younger son, but it had been agreed that it was time for the talented tutor to look out for a position more suitable to his acquirements. It was just then, in 1810, that his son Fryderyk came upon the scenes.



## CHAPTER II.

**B**ABY Fryderyk was not christened till April 23rd, as he was a delicate child, and the parish church at Brochov was some distance away. His parents thought it safer not to take him there in winter, even folded in his long cushion as babies are in Poland.

In spite of a little snow being still on the ground, in March, spring was on its way. The ice had melted on the river Utrata and the water-birds had begun to chirp and stir among the withered rushes of last year. There were soft, furry buds on the willow trees and the great ravens had disappeared from the fields.

In April, the wild geese and storks had made their appearance and a pair of storks built their nest in a big tree near the house. Then Mrs. Chopin took the baby out for the first time and walked with him up and down the garden walks between the rows of trees that were alive with singing birds.

The christening was fixed for April 23rd. Nicholas Chopin's pupils, Fryderyk and Anna Skarbek, were to be the god-parents, but as Fryderyk was studying in Paris, he was to be represented at the font by Nicholas' friend, Mr. Francis Grebecki. The baby was to be named Fryderyk, after the young count, and Francis after his father's friend.

The church in which the christening took place was an ancient one, founded in 1113 by the Polish princes of Mazovia. The original church had been of wood and it was only in 1561 that the squire of the Brochov estate, a knight named Brochowski, built a stone church in the form of a mosque, which looked like an old mediaeval castle, with its thick, loop-holed stone walls, strengthened with turrets. The inside of the church, which still exists in good repair, is formed of three naves, side by side. Round the inside walls runs a gallery, from the window of which there is a fine view of the far-off Vistula, the mother river of the Bzura and the Utrata. The marble font at which baby Fryderyk was baptized stands on the left side near the main altar rails, and has on it the arms of the restorer of the church.

The christening party was received in the porch by the parish priest, Father Jan Duchnovski, and, after the ceremony, Nicholas Chopin signed the following document :—

“ In the year 1810, on the 23rd of the month of April, at three o'clock in the afternoon, before us, the parish priest of Brochov, in the district of Sochaczew, province of Warsaw, appeared Nicholas Chopin, father, forty years of age, residing in the village of Zelazova Vola, and showed us a child of the male sex, which was born at his house on the 22nd day of February this year, at six o'clock in the evening ; declaring it to be his child and that of Justine, maiden name Krzyzanovska, twenty-eight years of age, his wife ; that he wishes to give it two names, Fryderyk and Franciszek (Francis). After making the above-mentioned declaration and showing us the child in the presence of Joseph Wyrzykowski, steward, thirty years of age, and Fryderyk Geszta, forty years of age, both residing at Zelazova Vola, the father and both witnesses, after reading this birth certificate, declared, standing, that they could sign it. We then signed this document. Father Jan Duchnovski, parish priest of Brochov, acting as registrar.

Mikolay Chopin, father.

The countess Skarbek's country seat was a modest one, but the hospitality and the pleasant manners of its mistress and its intellectual atmosphere, largely created by Nicholas Chopin, attracted many visitors belonging to the cream of Warsaw intellectual society. Among these, frequent guests were Mr. and Mrs. Linde, friends of the countess. Mr. Linde was the headmaster of Warsaw Lyceum. He was a scholar of repute and his wife was something of a musician. Mr. Linde loved to discuss literary questions with Nicholas Chopin. He watched, too, very observantly, the result of Chopin's educational system on his pupil, who was now making brilliant progress in Paris university. The plan of engaging Nicholas to be the teacher of the French language and literature in the Lyceum ripened in his mind, and in May, 1810, he came to Zelazova Vola with the purpose of form-

ally engaging him. The proposal fell in with Nicholas' wishes and, after consulting his wife, he accepted it. This was the beginning of twenty-one years of service, which lasted till the Russians, having taken Warsaw after the revolt of 1830, closed the Lyceum.

Soon after his acceptance of the post, Mr. and Mrs. Chopin went to Warsaw to look for suitable accommodation for their little family. Mrs. Chopin, who had been born and brought up in the country, felt that, even in town, she must be in touch with Nature, and so their choice fell on a little house, situated at the back of the palace built in the eighteenth century by Count Bruhl, Minister of one of the elective kings of Poland. The house was on the borders of a large park, which still exists.

It was decided that Mrs. Chopin and the babies should spend the summer at Zelazowa Wola, where their little dwelling was always at their disposal. To stay at a Polish country house for the summer was and is one of the most delightful manners of spending the warm season. The wide expanses of cornland, spreading to the far horizon, around the house, give an intoxicating sense of space and liberty. There is fruit in abundance and plenty of all things necessary to daily life. The eye is pleased with vivid colour in Nature and in the dress of the country folk. The sense of smell revels in a rapture of various fragrances, coming on the warm breeze from the neighbouring pinewoods, or from the manor gardens, rich in sweet-scented old-fashioned flowers.

So Mrs. Chopin and the little ones spent the hot summer days in the shady park near the manor house. The boy grew apace and flourished, and disappointed his mother only in one respect. As soon as she or his peasant nurse began to sing to him, he would begin to cry bitterly, so that it was almost impossible to quiet him. It had not been so with little Louise, who was already repeating her mother's songs in her baby way. Mr. Chopin comforted his wife saying that though the baby Fryderyk showed thus early a lack of that musical feeling evident in both his parents, they would make a good man of him yet.

But a little later Mrs. Chopin saw with joy that, after all, her son was taking vivid notice of the songs of the birds and of the various other natural sounds round him, and that made her understand that it was not a lack of feeling for music, but rather an extreme sensibility to it, that made the child cry when it was sung to.

In October the move to Warsaw was made. The Chopins' house at once became a centre of intellectual life in the town. Nicholas' stainless character, nobility of feeling and devotion to his adopted country made him popular and respected in Warsaw society. He was a man of a mild, though lively disposition, with pleasant manners, kind, refined in his ways and was also musical, playing fairly well on the violin and flute. Musical parties often took place in the Chopin's home, where the hostess knew how to create a pleasant, cheery atmosphere.

On July 9th, 1811, the third child, Isabella was born. By this time Louise, now four years old, would act as a little mother to her younger brother, who had begun to crawl about, and who, to the delight of Mrs. Justine, began to show a special liking for her old clavichord. He would listen in silence while his mother sang or played, and when he was two years old he liked to play with the clavichord himself, to press its keys and to listen with evident pleasure to the sounds he made.

Nicholas Chopin prospered in Warsaw. Besides his work in the Lyceum, he was appointed in 1812 to have courses of the French language in the artillery and engineering school and in the Catholic academy for priests. The best Polish families vied with each other to place their sons under his tuition. In 1813 the youngest child, Emilia, was born, and it was decided, so as to add to the resources of the family, and to enable it to live in real comfort, to yield to the persuasions of parents, and to take in a few chosen pupils to board, who would not only have the advantage of Mr. Chopin's intellectual training, but would also be under Mrs. Justine's motherly care.

Little Frycek (as he was called) was the delight of the whole household. He was a lively child, full of fun and mischief. Mrs. Justine would not, therefore, allow him



to go to the boys' quarters to play with them, but would sometimes invite a noisy party into her drawing-room, where the atmosphere somewhat moderated their boisterousness.

At this period, Frycek used more and more frequently to climb on the chair to get at the clavichord, and would choose harmonious chords, which his little fingers could scarcely strike. His "senior" sister, Louise, for whom he had a great respect, began, when he was four years old, to give him his first "lessons" in music. His other education was already advanced for his age. His mother had commenced to teach him to read and write, he knew his prayers by heart, and, every Sunday, went with his parents and elder sister to the church of the Visitation, on the other side of the big Saxon Square near which they lived. Old frequenters of the church used to tell how they saw the little boy, deep in prayer, kneeling beside his mother.

His musical abilities developed so rapidly that at five he could already play the easier pieces from his mother's repertoire and even invented melodies and variations. Already among his father's friends and acquaintances he began to be mentioned as a wonderful child. During the reception on Saint Nicholas' Day (his father's name's day, December 6th, 1816), dressed in his best clothes and with a big, white collar on his neck, the son of the house, amid the applause of the guests recited :—

"When your dear name's day, papa, brings me joy,  
Accept the tender wishes of your boy  
That you may live most happily, nor know  
Misfortune's face nor feel her stunning blow—  
That God may crown your days with blessings sweet—  
Such wishes, papa, lay I at your feet."

The time when young Chopin's budding talent began to unfold was the most brilliant that Warsaw had known since the partitions of Poland. The Constitution of May 3rd, 1793, with its high political ideology, was fresh in the minds of all. Nicholas Chopin, who had taken a lively and heartfelt part in the festivities which accompanied its proclamation, used in later years to give the benefit of his impressions on that occasion to his pupils

and children. At this time, too, the intellectual movement which had developed during the reign of Stanislas Augustus Poniatowski, the last king of Poland, was still in full bloom. King Stanislas had taken a deep interest in science, literature and art, and the Educational Commission of the Polish Diet, composed of the most brilliant men of the time and country, collaborated with the king in the construction of one of the most perfect educational systems known at the time.

But in the domain of music, during the eighteenth century, Poland was overwhelmed by German and Italian works. It was only just before the birth of Fryderyk Chopin that there began a movement, initiated in the name of early romanticism, towards the rapprochement of artistic music with folk motifs. This movement aimed at the restoration of directness of expression in music and therefore intended to break with artificial rules that galled inspiration. But the steps made for the purpose of enlivening classical forms with the rich material of folk motifs were yet very staggering and uncertain. The resulting music, for the most part, lost the sincerity and originality of its source (the folk melodies), and in general lost more than it gained by the innovations ventured upon. The creator who incorporated the spirit of Polish folk-music in his work, was still in his cradle.

Such was the atmosphere, intellectual and musical, in the minds of the guests who listened to the recitation of the six-years-old Frycek on December 6th, 1816, and who were then asked to listen to his musical production in honour of the day. The result of this performance was that his father was urged to let the little virtuoso have a more experienced teacher than his home circle could provide.

The director of the highest musical institution in Warsaw, the "Head School of Music," was then Joseph Elsner. Nicholas Chopin asked his advice and he recommended as a teacher, Voyciech Zyzny, the most popular music-master in Warsaw at that time. A short time after

Zyvny made his appearance at Chopin's house, with which the bonds of an unbroken friendship joined him till his death at ninety years of age.

Mr. Zyvnny's appearance was uncommon and original, and the cut of his garments and their colour belonged rather to the eighteenth than the nineteenth century. He had usually a white muslin cravat, a snuff-coloured coat, his breeches, like his coat, were yellowish and on his feet were long, patent leather boots.

But more original than anything else in his costume were his coloured waistcoats, of which he related that they were bought at the auction of the belongings of Stanislas Poniatovski, last king of Poland. In his pocket he had a snuff-box, with a picture of Mozart on the cover, of whom, as well as of Bach, he was a great admirer. He carried a red, cross-barred handkerchief and a long pencil, which he sometimes used as a rod on the fingers and head of recalcitrant pupils. But Frycek from the beginning amazed and delighted his teacher and had nothing to fear from the terrible pencil.

In spite of the eccentricity of his dress, Zyvnny was a clever man and a good teacher. From the beginning he recognized Fryderyk's genius and pupil and master were pleased with each other, always remaining the best of friends. He was really the only master who initiated Fryderyk Chopin into the secrets of pianoforte technique. He directed the boy's beginnings most excellently and never cramped the wings of his genius. He, too, took down the first longer compositions of the little composer, who was not able yet to write them down himself. He spent most of his evenings at Chopin's home and accompanied Mrs. Chopin's songs and Nicholas' violin and flute playing on the piano.

### CHAPTER III

**A**LREADY the fame of little Frycek had spread so in Warsaw that the carriages of the highest personages in the town were frequently standing before Mr. Chopin's door, ready to carry the little virtuoso to play in their owners' drawing-rooms. But Mr. and Mrs. Chopin tried to counterbalance the effects of the homage with which their young son was surrounded from his childhood, by teaching him religious principles and showing him an example of unselfishness and patriotism in their own lives. Frycek repaid his parents with devoted love and, as one of his contemporaries writes of him, "family sentiment was a second religion to Chopin. His cradle was surrounded with such a wealth of love and tenderness that the natural bonds were infinitely stronger than ordinary people could understand."

When Fryderyk reached the age of twelve, Mr. Zywny declared that his work as a teacher of the boy was finished and that it was time to confide him into the hands of Director Elsner himself.

But despite the intensity of his musical studies, Fryderyk's general education was not neglected. His parents did not contemplate his having a career as a musician, and had him carefully prepared to enter Warsaw Lyceum, of which he became a pupil (in the fourth class) in 1823. Simultaneously he entered the Head School of Music, under Elsner, to continue his study of piano playing and to learn the theory of composition.

Elsner was the second influence brought to bear on Chopin's genius. Besides being the director of the school of music, Elsner was also director of the Opera, and his activities in both these capacities are remembered with gratitude in the history of Polish music. His high artistic ideals and love of folk music had a profound influence on Fryderyk. "Elsner's principles as pedagogue and musician are valid for all time" writes H. Opienski, *Mus. Doc.*, Leipzig, Director of the Poznan Academy of Music, in his recent work on Chopin. A few of those principles may be quoted here: "The study of composition," says Elsner, "should not be governed by



too minute rules, especially in the case of pupils whose capacities are striking. Let them find out for themselves, so as to be able to excel themselves, and attain to finding that which has not yet been discovered. In the mechanics of the art it is not only necessary that the pupil should equal his teacher and surpass him, but that besides he should have something of his own." Further, Elsner says:—"Playing considered by itself is only a means used in the department of music (which is the speech of the sentiments)". "The pupil should not be advised to devote too long a time to one method, to one taste," and "What is true and beautiful should not be copied but felt according to one's own laws. Neither a man nor a nation should serve as a *non plus ultra*. Only eternal Nature is excellent in itself. Finally, in one word, that by which an artist, always taking advantage of what surrounds him and teaches him, surprises his contemporaries he may only derive from himself and by the perfecting of himself."

To-day, when instrumental technique is already victor over the whole field of musical colorization, it is evident that nothing is outlived so quickly as the effect of the latter. The contradiction of principles formerly held to is ceasing to excite curiosity. More is expected than combinations of sound calculated only to amaze the sense of hearing. We are returning to the conviction that only a deep interior inspiration can give new and vital elements to the musical world. Such, as is evident, were Elsner's principles too, and his pupil acted upon them to their full extent. In spite of the strong current contrary to his own impulse, with which he came into contact in his latter career, he remained faithful to his deepest feelings, expressed in the form which he chose for his own, the contents of which form, in spite of its modest means of expression, will be for all time held equal to the greatest masterpieces of instrumental music.

Summarizing the work of Zywny and Elsner as teachers of young Fryderyk, we see that they early recognized the uncommon gift that was in the child and the lad, and that, recognizing it, they consciously permitted the growth of his independent individualism. Fryderyk was



indeed understood, and though his teachers instilled into him respect and admiration for the classical works of genius, especially those of Mozart and Bach, yet they hesitated not to let him wander at will through the world which his experience and inclinations had created.

Though Chopin's family moved so early in his life to Warsaw, their relations with the country were never broken. Not only Mrs. Justine, but the children, and especially her son, longed for it. Every summer, and even other holiday times when possible, were spent at Zelezova Vola, and as soon as Frycek reached the mature age of thirteen he was allowed from time to time to leave home and spend his summer and sometimes other holidays not at Zelazova Vola with his parents, but at the country houses of friends in different parts of the country.

And now, beginning with this period of his life, we can trace step by step the working of the influence which Nature and those nearest to it had on the young musician. We can see how the kernel of his future musical conception grew—that kernel which was the impulse towards the “elevation of the folk-soul towards humanity.” It grew not through a process of uncritical departure from received form, nor through the adoption of forms without their animating spirit. It grew gradually and naturally with the interior development of Chopin's genius towards maturity. The earliest and strongest impressions, seized and mentally recorded, colourfully and characteristically, by young Frycek's perceptions, started the sub-conscious working of his intellect, or, otherwise expressed, they constituted the sub-stratum of the intellectual soil which, in Chopin's music, produced a very excellent union of the elements of folk-music with the musical culture developed through the ages.

Are there any traces of an express declaration of opinion by Chopin himself on the fundamental questions concerning the creation of his music, which later generations were to proclaim as national in its character? He often discussed the subject in Paris with the Corypheus of Polish romanticism, the great poet, Adam Mickiewicz, and the latter, in one of his lectures on Slavonic literature, given in Paris at this time, expressed an opinion about the

principles of musical inspiration in which opinion the influence of Chopin is evident, according to the latter's Polish biographers.

Here we quote the excerpts in question.

"The music in lyrical creation," says Mickiewicz, "is not an accompaniment, but is a principal and essential part of the poem. It is its soul, its life. It is here that we see the importance of a national music, of national song. We see now the reason why in countries where the 'folk' ceases to sing, poets must cease to create true lyrical poetry. Then what is that national music? As the songs of the folk that are born of the momentary sentiment of people who, frequently, are very prosaic, but who are moved by a real inspiration, form the whole of folk-poetry, similarly a national music, folk-music, is a collection of a host of songs brought to utterance by the musical inspiration of the soul of the nation. Where does that musical inspiration come from? Those separate tones, issuing suddenly and unexpectedly from the breast of the inspired, have been rightly named 'motifs.' A motive force is something that causes movement—that guides impulse. It is an element of movement. Physics itself admits that movement is not a material thing hence that element of it must have its place beyond matter. Motive forces cannot proceed either from matter or from abstract conceptions—they are ideas. Hence from time to time very learned musicians are very poor in motifs."

"Now the Slavonic peoples have an immense treasure of these motifs, still unknown and not made use of by composers. If any nation falls into materialism it immediately begins to lack motifs. It ceases to create songs, its music gets poorer. It may be passionate, it may give expression to the lower human emotions but it breathes forth no inspiration that is pure and creative. But without music there is no lyrical poetry. Beside what we have in the Bible its faint echo is preserved in the choruses of the Greek poets and in the theory of these choruses left us by Horace.

"He says that the chorus should teach truth, moderate passions, give good advice, raise prayers to the Deities, lament misfortune. These rules contain the whole

vocation of lofty lyrical poetry, but those scattered tones, those fractional parts of great music, wandering among the folk, are rarely appreciated by poets. Yet they are fruitful seeds. The ploughman behind his plough, who, looking at the sun, sings a tune to himself, which comes from nowhere, is a true lyrical author. In a way in all national song there prevailed that same quietude, that same heavenliness, that we find in the Hebrew poetry and in the songs of the Greeks. Casting off music, poetry fell into abstract philosophizing and had to call the lower passions to its aid."

. . . . .

Fryderyk's first longer absence from home was a visit paid when he was thirteen to Polish Pomerania, to see Torun, where his countryman, Copernicus was born. After leaving Torun he stayed for a while at the manor house of Kovalevo, in the Torun district, whence he addressed a letter to his "dear parents and darling sisters," which was sent by someone travelling to Warsaw, just before he left for a visit to Danzig. In this letter he boasts of his continual travels, which enabled him to become acquainted with wide expanses of his country. "To-day I shall be at Plock," he writes, referring to a town picturesquely situated on the high right bank of the Vistula, with an old Romance cathedral standing on a cliff above the river. "To-morrow I shall be at Rosciszewo, the day after to-morrow at Kikola, a few days after at Tuzno, then I shall stay some days at Kozlovo, then for a while at Gdansk (Danzig) and back again. I should like to send you, sisters, my little waltz, but I have no time, as we are just off. It is morning, eight o'clock (we never get up before seven o'clock), the air is fresh, the sun shines beautifully, the birds twitter, there is no stream, for it would murmur. But there is a pond and the frogs are croaking wonderfully. The funniest of all is a blackbird that is singing all kinds of odd things before the window, and after the blackbird the funniest is little Camilla, Mr. Zboinski's daughter, a baby of two years old, who has taken a fancy to me and is chattering."

One sound was missing on that happy morning to the ear of the lad, accustomed to the lapping of the waters of his native Utrata. "There is no stream, for it would murmur."

During the January of 1824, Fryderyk and his sister Emilia founded a "Literary Amusement Association," to which their father's boy boarders also belonged. Following up this literary effort, Frycek, who that year spent his summer holidays with his friend Dominik Dzievanovski at the country house of the latter's parents, Szafarnia, in the province of Kuyavy, not very far from Zelazova Vola, edited and "published" there, in connection with the above-mentioned association, a "newspaper," which he called the *Szafarski Kuryer*. This he sent instead of letters to his parents and sisters at Zelazova Vola. The newspaper was written for the most part in the local Kuyavy peasant dialect. Like all the Warsaw papers of this time, the Szafarski Courier had its censor, in the person of the daughter of the house, Miss Louise Dzievanovska, who saw to it that there were no jokes that were too sharp, as such were to be expected from the merry, mischievous editor. Miss Dzievanovska marks every number with the words "this may be sent L.D." but once, when a number was confiscated, the editor wrote:—

"Please Mr. Censor, let me be,  
Let my long tongue have action free."

Of this "Courier" only a few numbers are extant. In them the editor generally called himself "Mr. Pichon," but sometimes multiplied his pseudonyms, wishing, with true journalistic fervour, to populate his pages well.

#### KURYER SZAFARSKI

August 16,  
1824.

#### *National memories*

In the year 1820 the  
pond in the courtyard  
was cleared of mud.

#### HOME NEWS.

On August 11th Fryderyk Chopin Esquire went for a ride on a charger. Heran several races, but each time failed to get past Mrs. Dzievanovska, who was going on foot,



(but that was the horse's fault, not his). He won a victory, however, over Miss Ludvika, who had got fairly near the goal. Chopin Esquire goes out for a drive but with such honours that he always sits with his back to the horses. Jacob Chopin Esquire drinks six glasses of acorn coffee a day. Nicky eats four rolls every day, besides an enormous dinner and a supper of three dishes.

On August 13th this year Better Esq., played on the piano with uncommon talent. This virtuoso, a native of Berlin, played like Berger, the Skolimov piano player ; in skill and in his manner of holding his fingers he excels Miss Laguska, and he plays with such feeling, that almost every note seems to come not from his heart, but from his powerful belly.

On August 15th the important news came that by chance a turkey hen hatched out her brood in a corner of the barn. This important event not only served to increase the turkey family, but also increased the income of the state and secured its further increase. Last night a cat that stole unnoticed into the women's room broke a bottle of fruit juice. But though on the one hand it deserves to be hanged, on the other it is worthy of praise, for it chose the smallest bottle to break.

On August 12th a hen went lame, and a drake, fighting with a goose, lost a leg. A cow got so ill that it is grazing in the garden.

On August 14th a decree went forth that, on pain of death, no pig should dare to enter the garden.

#### FOREIGN NEWS.

In Bocheniec a fox ate two defenceless ganders. If anyone catches him let him inform the Bocheniec Law Court which will undoubtedly punish the animal according to law.

This may be sent. Censor L.D.

Mr. Editor Pichon's sketches evoke, as do the tones of his mazurkas a very vivid picture of rural Poland with its life, so full of humour, so bright with colour, and so pregnant with song.



The note at the end of the first number calls up before us the spacious square of the manor courtyard. The sheep house, the barn, the cow house and the stables form it. In it there is a little pond, very muddy, into which bits of animal refuse are frequently thrown, and which makes itself evident by its odour, in spite of the fragrant air coming from the fields and meadows. Its cleansing was an epoch-making event, the memory of which could not be treated lightly.

And in the silhouette of the editor's race with the lady of the manor, who does not see the majestic promenading of our great grandmothers in 1820?

Next comes a slight indication of the manner in which Frycek was spoilt by the upper ten of Warsaw. The young virtuoso was always given the best place in the carriages of even the first personages of the city and the editor almost unconsciously remarked at the change.

Acorn coffee was the cod liver oil of the early nineteenth century in Poland, and "Jacob" Chopin's assertion that he had drunk a large quantity hints at parental anxiety about the health of an only son.

Then Mr. Editor Pichon pokes fun at the local musical celebrities. At this time specially in provincial drawing rooms very pronounced sentimentalism in playing was greatly admired. The music played was for the most part of the character of the world renowned "Virgins' prayer" in which the authoress, Miss Badarzevska, implores heaven to send down dew on the rhododendrons when, at the time they are planted out in Poland, there is often scarcely enough moisture for the potatoes.

Pieces of this kind were played with extraordinary contortions of the body and arms, which appealed irresistibly to the sense of humour of the editor. In later days, at the height of his fame, Chopin used, when in a gay humour, to take off, for the benefit of his friends, the sentimental playing of the Betters and Laguskas of his boyhood.

We must not pass over the incident of the cat in the women's room. This room in a manor house in Poland was, and is still, the habitat by day of the higher women servants, the housekeeper, the ladies' maid and the seam-

stresses who come in when required from the nearest town to sew. This women's room buzzed with the local gossip of the day. In it in admired confusion, lay on the chest of drawers dream books, the master's socks and the mistress's stockings, awaiting darning and on greasy bits of newspaper containing the current prices of poultry and eggs, lay various bunches of the housekeeper's heavy keys. Behind vases of fading flowers stood opened bottles of fruit juice and pots of jam given by the generous hand of the housekeeper to her favourite of the day. The drawers, which officially contained materials, purchased in the metropolis, unofficially contained also strings of candied plums, strung as a rule on straws and fantastic gingerbread figures for the Manor children, and lumps of sugar, on which, in case of any higher servant fainting or getting "spasms" the housekeeper dropped a few drops of ether as a remedy.

The cow's health, mentioned in the *Courier* of August 12th was discussed with solicitude in this room. The cattle, belonging to the squire's department, it was only by special favour of the housekeeper, who was the vicereine of the lady of the house, that they could enter the garden, which was sacred, to the "Squiresess."

The matter of the cow's admission to the garden would be discussed with all befitting solemnity between the squire's viceroy, the steward, and the housekeeper, representing her lady.

KURYER SZAFARSKI.

Friday, August 27th  
1824.

Reminiscences :—  
Year, 1798.

The Chestnut Stallion,  
returning home, died on  
the very frontier.

On August 25th of this year Miss Kosteria, the dame who once in a charming voice called Simon Esq. "Gobble Gobble," coming out of the kitchen with a trough full of water, was gaping at something and went flop and smashed the trough. Such a great accident was immediately reported to the editor of the *Courier*, and he, considering it to be a freak of extraordinary dexterity, gave it the first place among the items of home news.

On the 26th at Kurnik a freak chicken was found. This scarecrow had two legs, one wing, no back parts and no head. The chickens' governess is trying, if she possibly can, to send it to Warsaw or some other capital, so that it may be examined and given a place among the most peculiar phenomena of nature.

Pichon Esq. is greatly annoyed by "Cousins" of which he found a great many at Szafarnia. They sting him as hard as they can, but it is a good thing that they don't sting him on his nose, for if they did he would have a bigger one even than he has.

On the 25th, Sudyna, a lady dog, caught a partridge in the corn. The honourable Miss Kozaczka, perceiving this, took the poor dead thing away from her and hung it on a pear tree. The cunning dog shook the pear tree and jumped till she got the partridge, which she then gobbled up with great relish.

The descendants of those famous heroes which saved the Capitol from the Gauls often buy the standing oats. This cheap bargain often causes the death of the lord merchants, for many of them get hit on the pate with a stick and still more perish on the spit.

The melancholy gobbler, the turkey's brother, got rotten fever from grief and lies without hope of life.

On the 15th a drake, stealing very early in the morning out of the poultry yard, drowned itself. Up to the present the reason of this suicide cannot be determined, as the family of the suicide won't say a word.

The cow is much better and nobody doubts she will recover.

#### FOREIGN NEWS.

On the 26th at Sokolow a turkey cock waddled by stealth into a garden.

A kite which had been brought up in the garden from its early youth, looked at him askance, and, coming up to him, wanted to scratch out his eyes. The turkey fluffed itself out, but, seeing it would gain nothing by bluff, had recourse to its beak. A battle began, victory favoured neither side, till at last, after a long struggle, the turkey cock won, pecking out the kite's right eye. The duel ended sadly.

Pichon, Esq. was at Golub, on the other side of the frontier on the 26th. Among other foreign beauties and details, he saw a foreign pig, which especially attracted the distinguished traveller's attention.

On the 25th at Bialkov a cat killed a hen, which nobody can regret enough.

A certain great lord from the neighbourhood, in spite of the strict search by the Customs' guard at the frontier, smuggled out three sticks under his cloak, for he got them on his jacket at the Golub Fair.

A Jew milkman at Rodzona was letting his calf feed in the Manor cornfield. It went off all right several times, but on the night of the 24th a wolf came and ate the beast. The lord of the manor is glad that the Jew was paid this way for that nefarious conduct, but the old Jew is mad with the wolf. He is offering the whole calf to anyone to deliver the culprit to him.

May be sent L.D.

The Editor's note which refers to the year 1798 recalls a matter of no small importance in the life of Szafarnia. The event recorded was a thunder clap, announcing the advent of a long continued storm in the quiet household of the Squire. Such news as this was kept secret then—as it was in Frycek's time and later—as long as possible from the lord of the Manor, and only in the evening, when the steward made his report, the terrible event would be told of. Already in the barnyard noisy investigations would have been made. The coachman would have accused the groom and the latter would have cast it back on the coachman. The stable boys would have been accused of giving the stallion too much or too little oats, and, by the shouting and altercation, the wives of the men concerned would be called out from their quarters and would join in the fight. With piercing screams they would run to the steward's quarters to defend the reputations of their respective husbands. The more valuable the stallion the more blame the steward would have to bear from his master for having let it be harnessed, even though this was probably done at the request of the ladies of the household who, finding it always difficult to get leave to take out the horses for their frequent little



excursions to the neighbouring town, would approach the steward, who naturally, found it very difficult to refuse them, as he might need their favour and influence at some future time. The final burst of the storm used generally to occur in the squire's drawing room, where the lady of the manor had to bear the reproaches of her lord, and would afterwards have "spasms," when the lady's maid would be called in with ether and smelling salts and for a few days afterwards excursions to town on very hot days did not take place, out of respect for the horses.

The next note is concerned with a familiar figure in the Manor. Besides the numerous "dames servantes," there was never a Manor House without a so-called "resident." These were often very distant relations of the family, or the descendants of some veteran of the last defensive war. They always inhabited the annexes of the Manor and being bachelors, lived very independent and individual lives. Independence and idleness led them frequently to the company of "Vengrzyn," (old Hungarian wine,) and even of brandy. These gentlemen were always called in the household by their Christian names, with a respectful Polish title equivalent to our Esq. prefixed to them. The company of alcoholic drinks had but too often its effect on their faces, making them red and purple, which again led to malicious remarks from the dames servantes, and the fact that one of the residents of Szafarnia, Simon Esq., passed by when Connie, the turkey girl, was marshalling her flock, and calling gobble, gobble to it, was caught up with glee by the inhabitants of the women's room to which the children of the manor attracted by the sweet things kept there, and by the extraordinary stories told there, were for ever running.

Now let us pass on to the event at Kurnik (otherwise in the poultry yard). Dreambook literature, long evenings spent by the fireside in the winter and the distance and inaccessibility of the towns, favoured the luxuriant growth of fancy among the females of the household. Sometimes the strange and mysterious happenings reported from the women's room reached the learned ears of scholars from the city, like Frycek or Dominik,



who, not appeased even by the strings of candid plums or gingerbread, made disquieting remarks and suggested the scientific examination of the phenomena.

Still under date of the 26th, Frycek calls attention to a prominent feature in the Polish country landscape. Great old pear trees are dotted here and there amid the wide expanses of cornland. These are intended to supply shade to the reapers during the harvest, and also to give their fruit as refreshment for the reapers and gleaners. Beneath their branches the harvesters sit in the hot noon, eating their bread and milk cheese, drinking water mixed with vinegar and breathing one of the most perfect perfumes in Nature's stock, the perfume of ripe rye, cornflowers and mint, cut and fading under the hot rays of the sun.

Even the barking of the dogs which ran after the partridges scared when the corn is cut, did not escape Frycek's journalistic fervour.

The immense fields in Poland are never divided by hedges, which gives rise to continual quarrelling about the incursions of the "Lord merchants" as the editor of the *Courier* calls the geese.

The next paragraph gives us a look at the daily judgment hour of the poultry girl. Every evening the number of the flock is verified by the housekeeper and all kinds of excuses are made for the lack of missing members of the feathered community, the numbers of which are marked on the walls of the poultry house with strokes, as the poultry girls, up to the present time, can neither read or write.

In the foreign news, in the person of the kite, the editor adverts to a custom of the Polish country gentry, of keeping a number of tamed birds and animals, such as herons, kites, and even wolf and bear cubs, in the gardens and parks of the manor houses. These enjoyed the general atmosphere of complete freedom which reigned. They generally ended sadly by accident, before they were old enough (in the case of the wolf and bear cubs) to be harmful even to their domestic brethren.

In every Polish village milk was collected for supplying the towns by a Jew, who lived in a house a little apart from his peasant neighbours. Occupied with trade, he did not care to labour on the land, and he allowed his cattle to graze on the squire's wide pastures.

The editor of the *Courier* does not speak metaphorically when he mentions that a wolf killed the calf. In the dense forest that then formed part of every estate, wolves were not scarce in the early nineteenth century, they used to kill cattle and steal poultry from the farms lying on the outskirts of the villages. The peasants bore this more patiently, but the eastern temperament and the commercial sense of the milkman made him come and stand before the manor and proclaim, with great gesticulation and lament, his loss.

#### KURYER SZAFARSKI.

Tuesday, August 31  
1824.

Reminiscences :—In  
1822 a mouse gnawed a  
hole in the Hon. Miss  
Josephine Dzievanov-  
ska's shoe.

On the 28th, when Pichon Esq. was performing his toilet, and dissertating about breakfast, a barefooted dame rushed shouting into the room. Little Pichon, amazed, opened his mouth wide and stood there gaping, at first, but after a moment he learned the reason of the tears and lamentations. The Hon. Lord Chamberlain, Victor Sikorovski commonly called by Miss Michuchna "Fichtur," quarrelled with "Miss" Kozaczka, and, after long disputing and peripheries, gave the dame such a lovely slap on the pate that she had to appeal to the highest court.

On the 29th a cart full of Jews was driving along. Die ganze Familie consisted of an old sow, three big Jews, two little Jews, and six head of Jew children. The whole lot were sitting in a heap, like Dutch herrings. Then a stone in their way upset them, the cart was overturned and they lay on the sand in the following order: First of all the kids, each one in a different position, most of them with

their legs in the air, and, on them, the old Sow, groaning under a load of Jews, who in their flight and with the impetus of their fall, lost their black skull caps.

On the 30th, three country lasses came to blows in the cow-house. Two especially, armed with a bucket and milk pail beat the third, who was unarmed, and although in the end she got both the bucket and the milk pail (*nota bene* on her muzzle) she could not resist the other two.

On the 30th the Hon. Mrs. Zakierska, citizen of Szafarnia, having quarrelled with another woman, in a rage that she could do her no harm, wanted to drown herself. By good luck Mrs. Schroeder, wife of that old citizen, the gardener, perceiving that, ran up, and, when the other already had her head in the pond, skilfully pulled her out by the legs and saved her life.

Sudyna, the lady dog, following Miss Josey to the village, caught a goose, killed it and ate it.

On the 21st four geese were caught in the Manor corn-field. Up to the present they are on parole, but nobody knows how it will end.

The cow is getting better and better and, at the general consultation, the doctors declared that she was quite out of danger.

#### FOREIGN NEWS.

On the 20th, Pichon Esq., driving through Nieszawa, heard Catalani, sitting on a fence, sing something at the top of her voice. It interested him very much, and, though he heard the aria and voice, not satisfied with that, he tried to hear the words. Twice over he passed by the fence but in vain, for he understood nothing at all, till, in the end, seized with curiosity, he fished out three farthings and proffered them to the singer, if she would repeat her ditty. For a long time she wriggled, made faces and excuses, but encouraged by the three farthings, she made up her mind and sang a dear little mazurka, of which the editor, with the permission of the authorities, and of the censor, will quote one verse only as a specimen :—

Look behind the mother turkeys  
How the wolf is dancing.  
Its quite clear he has no wife  
And that's why he's prancing.

At Radomin on the 29th a cat went mad. Fortunately it did not bite anyone, but ran and jumped in the field, and that only till it was killed, for after it was killed it stopped and didn't play the fool any more.

At Dulnik a wolf ate a sheep for its supper. The sorrowful guardian of the remaining lambs offers the tail and ears to anyone who catches the wolf, binds and brings it to the family council for the "question."

May be sent L.D.

It was the custom for the squire's unmarried sisters to live in their brother's house, who, by maintaining them, paid them their dowry. Being quite care free, they were jolly creatures, not at all like their embittered sisters of the town. They employed themselves by doing fancy work and performing acts of charity such as gathering herbs to brew medicine for the peasants, which they afterwards distributed. They read numberless romances, played on the clavichord and in the evening had a game of poker or "marriage" with the residents or with the parish priests, in the manor drawing room, and they spoilt their nephews and nieces, with whom they lived in great harmony. Still their pecuniary resources were distinctly limited, and a hole in Miss Josephine's shoe made by a mouse two years before was recalled with sympathy by the young members of the family. Time in the country walked with a slow and slumberous pace. What according to chronology was two years, was only a few days of 24 hours in the memory of the old maid.

The event of the 13th appealed very much to the editor's fighting spirit, as it was a really memorable fight, for the peasant girls have the strength and muscles of Valkyries.

The tragedy of the quarrel which took place at Szafarnia on the 30th between the two women could not be fully understood by the 14 years old editor. As usual when it came to such a hot fight, a matter of jealousy was in question among the peasant women. Doubtless the party injured by the common lover of the two "ladies" saw no other way out of her misfortune but death.



The mention of the geese being on parole refers to an everyday event on a country estate. As we said before, the wide-spreading fields have no hedges, so the peasant goose girls often send their flocks into the squire's oats. When they are caught there, the geese are impounded, and the whole affair is referred to the steward, who punishes the owner of the geese by forcing him to send his lad or lass for so many days, according to the damage done, to work in the squire's field.

The cow's doctors mentioned in the last paragraph of this number, were a council composed of the steward and housekeeper with her attendants, who often ended by giving the patient some mysterious decoction of herbs, gathered by moonlight, charcoal dissolved in water, or, in the last resource, herbs sprinkled with holy water on some festival and specially preserved for such occasions.

The foreign news column of this number may be of great interest to musicians and folk-lorists. The first mentioned will notice that the aria and the voice interested Frycek very much and the second will observe that he was not satisfied till he got the words too. The whole composition is not quoted, for, not without reason, a part of the too Rabelaisian contents were crossed out by the Szafarnia censor. It was not without difficulty that Frycek could approach the home-grown Catalani. The gig in which he was driving had to be stopped, and first of all he had to persuade the people with whom he was driving to stop for such an unreasonable reason as the desire to hear a peasant girl "shouting." Had he not heard Catalani herself, and had he not even received from her, in her admiration of his talent, a beautiful golden watch with a flattering inscription? And then when he had got the words at last and climbed back into the gig, he had to listen to reproaches that the hour was late and assertions that he could order any of the Szafarnia girls to sing for him whenever he liked. But Frycek delighted with his acquisition, would do nothing but whistle the "dear little mazurka," as he lovingly called it, which he had just heard.

The melodies he created have the same source of inspiration as the folk melodies—a pure heart in contact with free



Nature—only the peasant songs were the rough crystal and his music the cut jewel of art. Fryderyk never made a collection of folk tunes saying “Genius will some time unfold the truth in them,” but he listened to them with his whole soul, absorbing into himself their rhythm, their melodies and the archaic colour of their harmony.

## KURYER SZAFARSKI

Friday, September 3rd,  
1824.

Reminiscences :  
Szafarnia founded in  
1740 by Lawrence  
Szafarniak.

On the first day of the month, Pichon Esq. was playing the “Village Jew Merchant” on the piano, when Mr. Dzievanovski called the village Jew milkman and asked him for his opinion of the Yiddish Virtuoso. Mose came up to the window, poked his humpy, lofty nose into the room, and listened, saying that if Pichon Esq. would consent to play at a Yiddish wedding, he would earn at least two thalers. This pronouncement encouraged Pichon Esq. to study that kind of music, as much as possible, and, who knows, perhaps he may devote himself altogether to such profitable harmony.

September 2nd, a cat which had only just been transported to the manor escaped from the room. Its guardian ran after it and seeing that it was running away, began to chase it. She had nearly caught it when the cat, jumping over a fence, rested safely on the other side. But the dame, absolutely wishing to catch it, scrambled up on the fence so as to get to the other side, but, her foot slipping, she lost her balance and fell plump like a cake on the ground.

September 3rd. The Hon. Mr. Luke, holding the office of farm lad, scrambling up a pear tree, began to shake the wild pears down to the dame who was greedily waiting in the shade of the trees, for the little pears to fall. After shaking several times, as none of them would fall, he himself, *nota bene* by accident, fell to the ground instead of the wild pears.

September 2nd. The Hon. Miss Bridget, the cook, making various manoeuvres with the dough in the trough, through too great dexterity and skill shot it all out on to the floor.

September 1st. "Murzyn" (Nigger) going out with his master towards evening into the fields, killed a partridge, *nota bene* without a gun or powder.

The cow is incomparably better. It is already receiving visitors and will perhaps soon return their visits.

#### FOREIGN NEWS.

September 1st. A kite devoured a partridge in the Bocheniec forest.

September 5th. The marriage of the Hon. Jan Levandowski Steward, and Miss Katherine Ciszevska, daughter of the Governor of the province of Bocheniec, will take place. The Governor's wife is making great preparations. The bridegroom is already asking guests to the wedding. Among the others, Mr. Pichon got an invitation, which he is inexpressibly glad of. So also did the editor of the *Courier*, who in the next number, will infallibly describe the more important scenes and incidents of the wedding.

On September 2nd at Bialkov, an obstinate battle began between a dog and a cat about a piece of meat, which was lying on the road. Both of them fought with undaunted mind, the smell of the meat evoked their courage and appetite, their mutual enmity. Long and valiantly did they struggle, long did the undecided fortunes of battle fill the spectators with terror, till at last the cat, having scratched out with her sharp claws the eyes of the Spitz, which was already weary with fighting, and weakened with numerous wounds, yet twice more repulsed, at last killed him. And while everyone was lamenting the fate of the poor doggy, the victor carried off the meat in triumph, but soon, covered with hidden wounds, fainted fell, turned over and died.

August 21st. At Retviny, wolves ate twelve sheep. Whoever catches the chief of the pack is to deliver him up to the Governor of the Province of Retviny, and he will get a reward of the half of one of the before-mentioned sheep.

May be sent L.D.

The reminiscence of the year 1740 is a sign of the interest taken by the boy Fryderyk in traditional and historical details in the love of which he was brought up. The echo of this is found in the polonaises, in which the whole pageant of the colourful life as a Polish noble passes before us.

How interested the editor would have been had he known that the castle in his county town of Sochaczew, close to Zelazowa Wola, the ruins of which were so familiar to him, was once the seat of "Christophorus de Schidlowijecz," Chancellor to the King of Poland and palatine of the district of Sochaczew and others, who corresponded with Henry VIII of England, as we read in the Calendar of State Papers, Volume 4, part 1. Christophorus sent presents of falcons by an envoy to "Bluff King Hal," who, like himself, was a passionate lover of the sport of falconry. In return the palatine received autograph letters conveying the king's thanks, with a promise that the monarch would send his servant for more!

Though the event of the first day of September mentioned in the *Courier* was obviously only a joke as well on the side of the squire as of Moses, something of truth may be found in it. The village Jew was the hedge councillor of the manor in business matters. His active commercial instinct led him to have continual communication with the neighbouring towns, even across the frontier. He was an "extra special" every time he appeared, retailing all the news of to-day, not only commercial, but political. He was listened to half jokingly, half seriously. He knew the financial conditions of every squire for miles around and no transaction was concluded in the country side without his having part in it. In spite of his apparent humility, Moses was the "nervus rerum" in business relations between the country gentlemen and between the peasants.

In the foreign news of September 5th the editor tells his readers about the announcement that had been made of a wedding between the members of well-off peasant families, noting that he was inexpressibly glad that he had been invited to it and promising to give a description in

the next number of the *Courier*. Unfortunately the number in which the promised description occurs has not come down to us. The loss is no small one to the musical world, for Mr. Pichon's comments on the Polish peasant wedding songs that have come down from heathen time, would have been eminently worth reading.

One finds in these songs a surprising wealth in rhythm, melodic line and harmony. Their importance may not be ignored by anyone interested in the history of music. Researches as to their origin often prove that they have a melodic structure formed of motifs which belong to the ancient tonic system. The comparative study of Chopin's works and these melodies gives, according to modern French and Polish musicians, evidence how they developed in him the sense of harmonic research, and as he is considered by the latest musical critics to be a most daring innovator in the highest rank of harmony, their views about him are one more proof of the value of and necessity for the study of folk music, if national musical genius is to be fostered.

Notwithstanding however, the lack of this number of the paper we may follow Fryderyk Chopin step by step through all the peasant wedding ceremonies ordained by a tradition that has been handed down from one generation to another to our own time. Records of this old time ritual have been made for us, too, by pious hands. As the wedding was in Chopin's day so it is in ours. The bondage of Poland for over a century stemmed the tide of "civilization" and the old customs remained. The writers have been guests at many such weddings, have joined in the songs and sat at hospitable peasant tables.



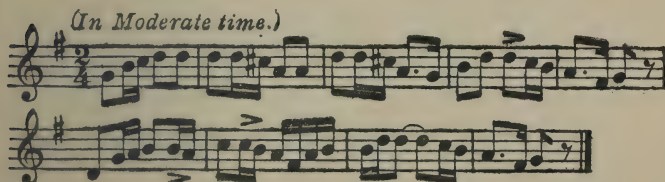
## CHAPTER IV

THE larch-wood parish church of Bocheniec stood among lime trees that now, in July, gave forth an almost overpowering fragrance in the hot sun. Groups of peasant folk, in their brightly-coloured costumes, were sitting in the shade of the overhanging roof (the mischievous boys of Szafarnia manor used to say that there was more roof than church). The women were telling their rosaries and some of the elder men, with spectacles far down on their noses, were reading slowly out of their thick prayer-books. From the wide-open door of the church came the sound of singing, accompanied by the cracked tone of the organ, announcing the end of high-mass. In a moment a flood of peasant worshippers poured out of the church and mingled with those outside.

A group of lads and lasses formed itself a little further away near the churchyard wall. Then the group broke up, and, two by two, its members strolled away out of the churchyard into the village. As the last pair went out through the gate, some girls that were standing by it burst out into song :—

“ In our village there’s a maiden  
With wealth laden, who will take thee.  
Four small cats, four mice still smaller  
And a dog to town to haul her—  
That’s her fortune, with a kettle,  
Her old, blind dog behind the settle.  
The dog has no tail behind her—  
And you at home will never find her.”

The song was followed by a laugh, and an elderly farmer who stood near, taking a pipe which he had just lit from between his teeth, capped it with another :—

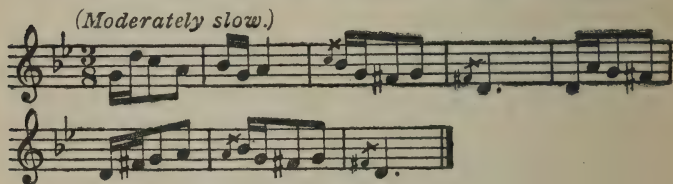




" I would greet you, fain would meet you  
If I give you pleasure,  
Ask my father and my mother  
For me, for your treasure."

When I see you I will flee you—  
Near the stove be hidden.  
Spite my sighing and my crying  
I'll be glad you're bidden.

The wooing of rich Kate Ciszewska by Levandovski from Szafarnia had become a matter of common knowledge in Bocheniec and the village lads were mightily discontented at it. There was discontent, too, in the " women's room " at Szafarnia, for Jan was a comely fellow and might have been expected to wed at home. " Miss " Michuchna, known to us already, gave expression to that discontent by singing about him before a delighted audience, composed of the housekeeper and her court :—



" Get up and open maiden  
I would not stand here,  
For I have but one jacket  
And not mine, I fear.

Open, open, open  
To me the hall-door,  
For with presents brought you  
My pockets do brim o'er."

" For your gifts, your presents  
I don't care a pin.  
When the fire is burning  
I'll just throw them in."

But Jan paid no attention to jealousy or jibes. A fortnight after the summer day by the church (so long custom bade him wait) he made his way with an assured step through the village of Bocheniec in company of a tall,

stout man, known to the whole "province" (as Frycek maliciously calls it) as Mateusz Czaj, the "matchmaker."

Not without thought and deep debate had this evening expedition been decided upon, for Jan and Mateusz were on their way to the cottage of Kate's parents to make a formal proposal of marriage. Before this Jan and his father had spent three long evenings in the "svat's" (matchmaker's) cottage at Szafarnia, talking over Kate's character and fortune and drinking whiskey brought by themselves, for such exciting and important discussions make the mouth dry.

When they entered Kate's cottage they humbly clasped the knees of her parents and said, "May Jesus Christ be praised," and the parents answered, "Forever and ever, Amen!" Next Jan asked, "Isn't there by chance a grey goose here? We have lost one and are looking for her." Old Mother Ciszevska, who knew quite well what the visit meant and was well prepared for it, replied :

"Just sit down and eat and drink and maybe she'll be found afterwards!"

Meanwhile Kate, who had seen them coming up the road, had hidden herself, as custom bade her, behind the kitchen stove. The matchmaker and Jan, invited by Kate's parents, sat down to the table, where bread, milk, cheese, sausages and whiskey awaited them. Mother Ciszevska, evidently pleased with the visitors, kept pressing them to help themselves, but the matchmaker, after twice emptying his glass, put his elbows on the table and said significantly :

"We are eating and drinking, but we don't know why," and, taking a third glass of whiskey, he clinked it with Jan, saying :—

"May God give you health!"

"Drink and God be with you!" answered Jan, and then Mateusz Czaj solemnly turned his empty glass upside down and placed it on the table before him. Mother Ciszevska's face beamed, for Czaj's action was the sign that he reckoned himself no longer as a mere chance guest. He took up his office as matchmaker. At the sound of the glass which he set down with ostentatious loudness, the door, which had been left purposely ajar, opened and Jan's

parents, with a number of neighbours and friends from Szafarnia, peeped in as if they were looking for somebody and said :—

“ As this son of ours is always running here away from us, there must be something that he likes here and, so as to have no more bother with him, we must leave him with you.”

With that Father and Mother Ciszewski said :—

“ If God permits, we shall not hinder you. Ask Kate is she is willing.”

But there was no sign of Kate. It was not till her mother had literally dragged her out of her prescribed hiding-place behind the stove, that she made her appearance, with a red face, which she hid with her forearm.

“ Will you have me,” asked Jan, in an unusually shy voice. “ Will you have me, Kate ? ”

“ How should I know ? ” she uttered. In spite of their doubtfulness, these were the ritual words of consent and Mat took them both by the hands and led them to Jan’s parents, who gave them solemnly some bits of bread and cheese, amid the singing of the whole company :



“ When thou goest  
Out a wooing  
Take some bread for  
Her thou’rt suing.

That when eating  
And when drinking  
She of thee may  
Well be thinking.”

Having eaten the bits of bread and cheese, Kate took, on a sign from the matchmaker, a little silk handkerchief of a colour like the green on a duck’s neck, spread it out square on the table and pinned on to it a tiny wreath of

rosemary, adorned with red and blue ribbon bows. Mother Ciszewska placed it on a plate before the matchmaker, who got up and, leaning the knuckles of both hands on the table, began to speak.

"I would ask you, young folk," he began, "Kate and Jan, and the parents of you both to come to me."

There was a movement on the benches by the table and the required persons, squeezing their way among the other guests, ranged themselves in a row before him.

"What do you intend to do, what is your will?" he continued.

Jan knelt down before Kate's parents and said:—

"I ask you for your Katie," to which they answered:

"If it's God's will take her. It is not we who shall live with her, but thou."

Then Mat, straightening himself, addressed first the Ciszewski and then the Levandovski parents, asking them:

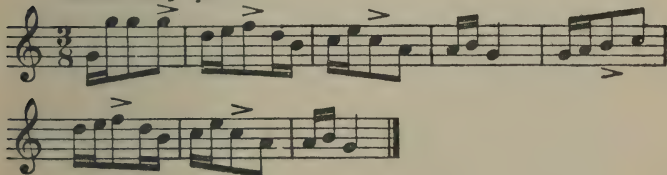
"What will you give to your children?"

Father Ciszewski answered, "I will give Kate some ground with a cottage on it, one cow, two pigs, and some poultry."

"And I," said Levandovski, "I will give my son fifty ducats, two horses and a cart, and after my life he shall have all that's mine."

With that everyone sat down and a discussion of details ensued. At its end the matchmaker, rising from his place, asked leave for himself and Jan to come soon again for the formal engagement ceremony. When the Ciszewskis had given their consent, the high-pitched voices of the women present sang:—

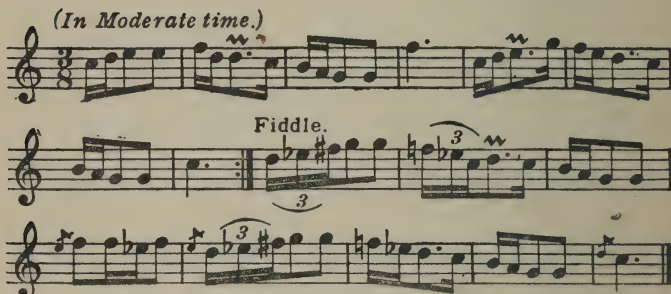
*(Moderately quick.)*



" A gnat did woo  
A fly so small  
All in vain.  
He bought for her  
A bright robe  
With a train—  
With a train.

She walks abroad  
In silver robed  
Lady great,  
And he behind  
With humble steps  
Glad to wait—  
Glad to wait."

And Jan, unmoved by the mockery of the song, replied :



" Pleasant is the world, my maiden,  
Pleasant to us now.  
Only let us marry maiden—  
We shall not be sad."

At this point, as it was already late in the evening, and but little light came through the cottage windows, small oil lamps were lit in the square, whitewashed cottage room, with its row of holy pictures hung round the walls. In one corner of this room a big, whitewashed stove gleamed. Two state beds (never slept on) with piles of pillows up to the ceiling, stood underneath the holy pictures. A solemn silence prevailed for a few minutes and then began a lively discussion on the details of the engagement and wedding ceremonies. Jan promised to hire the "music,"

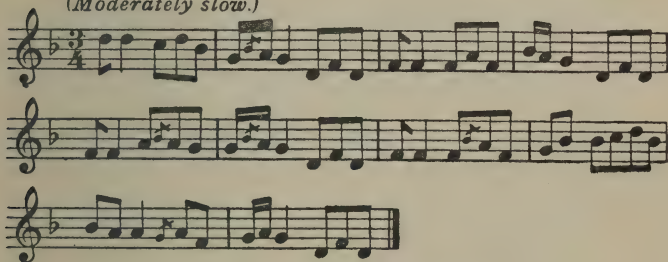


by which he meant one or two fiddlers and a double-bass player, and to provide for drinks, including beer, whiskey and a bottle of mead. He would have, too, to buy at the Golub fair across the frontier, shoes and white stockings for the bride. Kate on her side promised to present him with a white linen shirt. Her parents promised to invite the best men, bridesmaids and, amid much laughter, the chief woman matchmaker with her assistants was chosen from among the company. She would have an onerous part, acting through all the varied ceremonies that were to follow as "wedding mother." But it was no small compliment to be chosen and, in spite of the trouble involved, Mother Skvara, elected on this occasion, had a smile of gratified pride on her broad face, for only the most witty of the women and the best singers and dancers could hope to be chosen for such a post.

. . . . .

In due course the formal betrothal ceremony took place and was followed by dancing far into the night. This commenced with the "walked" dance, sometimes called the "polonaise." Jan and Kate opened the "ball" and, standing before the fiddlers, as custom commanded, sang the song the melody of which the fiddlers were to repeat for dancing:—

*(Moderately slow.)*



"A fish I caught in clouded water flowing—  
Caught it and held, though in the depths 'twas going.

It slipped away from my hand swiftly fleeting—  
How did I merit such ungrateful treating?

If I could know where fled the river's daughter  
Oarless I'd seek her in the furthest water.

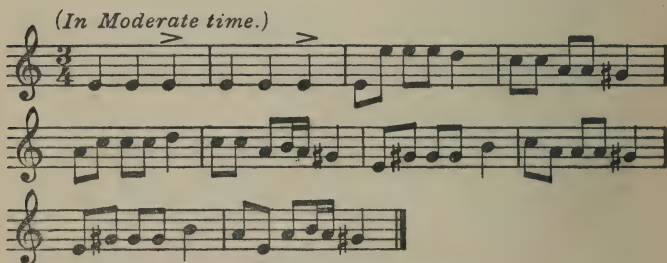
If I could know now that my own I'd make her  
I'd send my heart out on a line to take her.

Oh ye wise scholars that the stars do reckon  
If ye perceive her straightway to her beckon."

"She sits in an orchard all green and gay with flowers  
With a pearl comb combing her hair through sunny hours."

"I go to meet her and glad she smiles to me,  
My heart is fainting to think such joy can be."

Dance followed dance and song, song. Kate's chief  
bridesmaid, her sister Mary, and Bartek the miller's son,  
stood out together and sang lustily :—



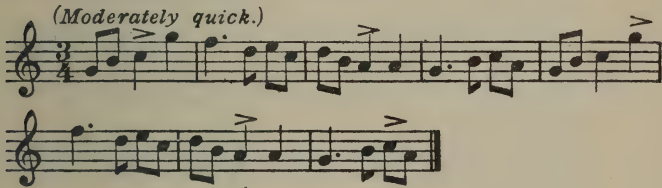
"Come and dance neighbours  
Behind or before,  
For not only you  
Do dance on the floor.  
Dance on before me  
If you will, neighbour,  
For dancing is not  
The hardest of labour.

And yet again :—

"Comely before and comely behind her—  
So fair a maiden you'll never find her.  
Someone a gown of red poppies has twined her  
Look well and mind her, look well and mind her.  
Someone a gown of red poppies has twined her.  
A poppy gown and a white hem showing.  
Our bride so young like a wood-dove is going."

The dawn was almost in the sky when the company separated.

Followed the inviting of the guests, which took several days. Mat the matchmaker went round with Jan the bridegroom, the best men and fiddlers. On this errand they rode on horseback and they were all dressed in their long, Sunday coats, with white scarfs over the right shoulder, fastened with a bow at the left side. The scarves were adorned with rosemary and thyme and from the bow hung multicoloured ribbons, except in the case of Jan, whose ribbons were white and green. On their high square caps they had bouquets of artificial flowers, tied with red ribbons. They carried long whips, also adorned with rosemary and flowers and had white handkerchiefs, which they held by one corner. Attached to the pockets of their long coats were little woollen shawls, with a Turkish pattern on them. When this company was riding at a quick gallop, with all the ribbons and shawls fluttering in the wind, it looked quite like a flock of gay-coloured birds. As they rode they sang :—



“ Now the best man  
With the bridegroom  
Calls the guests all to the wedding.  
Pardon him all  
Whom he doth call  
If he wakes you 'mid your bedding.

Under the windows of the prospective bridesmaids they would stop suddenly and sing :—

“ Gaily we have come to seek thee—  
Come to seek thee  
But thou art hidden.  
At thy door we knock so meetly,  
And we talk with thee so sweetly.  
In we're not bidden.”

As the party entered each house the chief best-man said :—

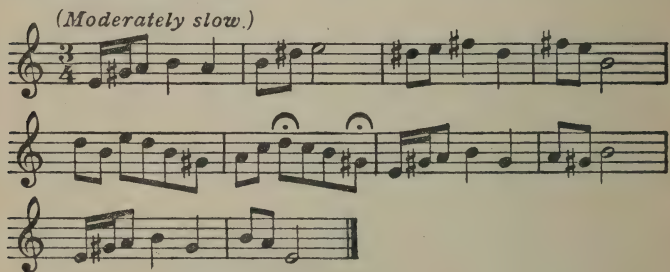
" Oh joyful this hour and this day—'twill delight you—  
The young pair to be wedded have sent to invite you."

The fiddlers accompanying the party would play a merry tune and then the farmer would ask the whole company to sit down and would treat them to food and whiskey; as they clinked glasses they would sing :—

" Drinks our Jimmy  
To our Jacob.  
He with Michael's  
Clinking.  
Who toasts not our meeting  
He shall get a beating.  
Hit him, smack him,  
Soundly thwack him,  
He shall get a beating.

And then the fiddlers would play again and the whole company would cheer and would begin to dance for a short while.

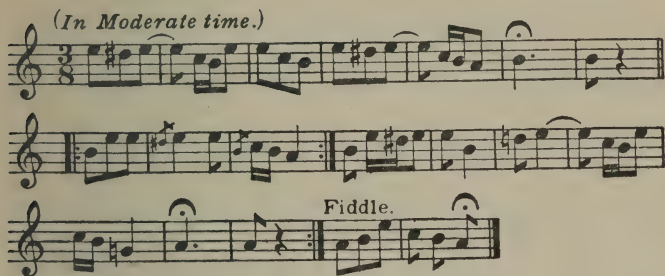
Some of the guests lived a long way off, so, when the company was coming back to Szafarnia at dawn they stopped under the bride's window at Bocheniec and sang a little serenade :—



" Neighbours all  
Cocks crowing  
Ere the dawn  
Was showing.  
Open to me  
Brightest mine and sweetest.  
To our new home thou greetest—  
To our new home thou greetest."

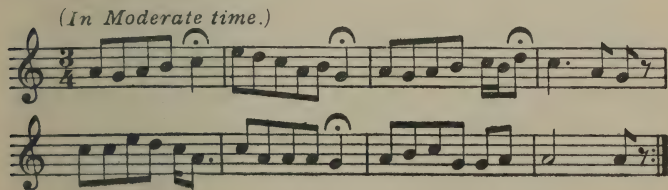


The ceremonies of the next day were divided. Some took place at Szafarnia and some at Bocheniec. Very early in the morning the matchmaker woman with her assistants came to Kate's cottage to bake the wedding cake. While doing this they sang a song to the heathen Slavonic goddess of the household. So old was this traditional song that they sang it without knowing the meaning of the name they were repeating :



“ Oh Lado, Lado, Lado,  
 Little birds swiftly winging—  
 Little birds swiftly winging,  
 Boughs from the bush are bringing  
 The cake to deck with singing.  
 Oh Lado, Lado, Lado—  
 Nestlings their first flight trying  
 They broke a branch and its lying—  
 A wreath for the bride they're tying.”

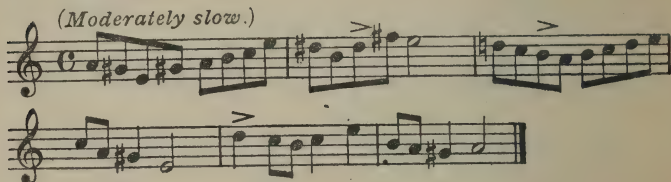
Then came the farmers' wives invited, bringing gifts to the bride's mother—geese, chickens, ducks, eggs, beans, meal, flour, butter and spices. After them came singing, the bridesmaids :—



" Kate went to the field  
And there she stood still  
Beneath a maple  
In the chill,  
And she was looking  
For her own Johnny  
By which path he was riding.

He's riding, riding  
My boy, my Johnny  
Through the green clustered grove,  
Oh look—my bonny !  
His fine ostrich plume  
So bravely is spread  
Over his horse's proud head."

As they crossed the threshold of Kate's cottage they sang again :—



" Fair Kitty come out friends to greet  
The chief bridesmaid fain would you meet  
With her train, with her train, with her train."

Kate came out to welcome them, they stuck a twig of rosemary on the coloured kerchief on her head and all went together to ask her most intimate friends once more to the marriage. Everywhere they met with a warm welcome and Kate returned home with her bridesmaids, all carrying bunches of multicoloured ribbons given her for the wedding wreath.

They came back late, and the matchmaker women were loud in their reproaches, declaring that there would scarce be time to deck the rod. Now this "rod" is the most important item in the wedding ritual, for it is a symbol of the bride's maidenhood. So there was a great haste and bustle and all sat down to a table, shutting the door of the room so that no married women should enter, and began their work.

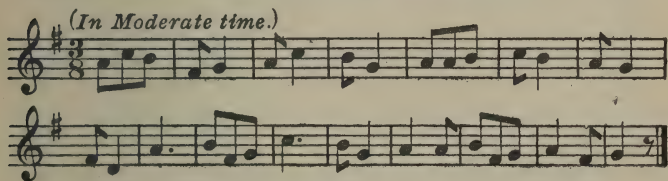
They took a pear branch and tied a pine branch to its end, looking carefully to see that there was an odd number of twigs. On these twigs they fastened little apples of a vivid red colour. These apples had been carefully chosen, for after the wedding ceremony they were to form a gift to the celebrating priest and to the best men.

They next adorned the "rod" with gold and silver ribbons, artificial roses, peacocks' and cocks' feathers, with rue, periwinkle and bilberry twigs. When the rod was finished, Kate, her face as bright with emotion as the "rod" itself, held it up. The ribbons were so long that they hung down and almost covered the white shawl attached to the place where she held it. Then the bridesmaids surrounded her and sang :—

" My little garland of periwinkle  
'Twas my hands thy seeds did sprinkle.  
In the garden thou wert growing,  
Who will now care for thy sowing.

My young sister still will care thee,  
For she yet has time to wear thee.  
When she comes to years of knowing,  
Then she will thy seeds be sowing  
In two borders they'll be growing."

And the chief bridesmaid sang all by herself :—

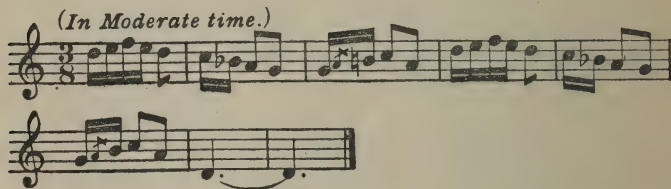


" Katie a garland was making,  
Heart flowers of rue she was taking.  
She wove it, wove it with her maidens in waiting.  
One maid the rue stems was breaking,  
One the white daises was taking.  
Then that wreath of flowers fleeting  
To her mother rolled in greeting."

As the last words were sung, three knocks were heard and Mother Ciszewska came in crying and carrying the bride's dress. It consisted of a white linen shirt with long

sleeves and a green, sleeveless bodice. The shirt was wide and gathered. The skirt was bright green, but yet a little darker than the bodice. The bodice was richly embroidered with gold and silver thread and seed pearls and Mother Ciszewska had hung from one of her arms a rope of real coral beads for the bride's neck. She brought, too, the bridegroom's present—a pair of high boots with high heels and white stockings.

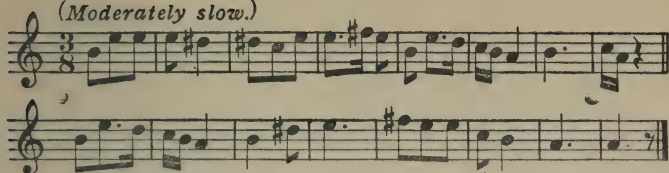
Before they dressed the bride, the bridesmaids changed into bright, multicoloured skirts of red, blue, green, yellow and white, and put on their heads very tall wreaths of artificial flowers, with broad ribbons hanging down, and prepared their handkerchiefs, prayerbooks and rosaries. Then they put on the table a crown of green, white and blue ribbons, intended for Kate's head. The bride meanwhile was sitting on a stool and her mother, still weeping, was plaiting her hair; as she did so the bridesmaids sang:—



“ Oh thou wilt weep, little maiden, tears will fall  
When thou goest to the high altar before them all.”

When the plaiting and dressing were finished, the rod was put into Kate's hand, and the wreath on her head, she was left alone for a while and the girls ran out into the farmyard to take leave in her name of the livestock which she was wont to care for. It was already dawn. In the distance the sound of fiddling was heard, coming from the direction of Szafarnia, and the bridegroom Jan, with his company on horseback, followed by carts containing his family and guests from his village, arrived. The bridesmaids hastened back to the cottage and on the threshold stood to greet him with a song:—



*(Moderately slow.)*

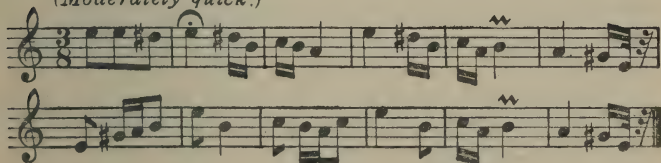
" When little Kitty out in the garden  
To the red rowan going  
Spied there nearing,  
A gallant, brave wedding,  
Swiftly her tears were flowing.

" My little mother, mother my dearest—  
What, oh what is betiding ?  
Decked out with feathers  
With bright flowers covered  
Who on grey horses are riding ? "

" My daughter dearest,  
Child of my bosom,  
'Tis a wedding is hasting,  
Soon decked with feathers  
With bright flowers covered  
Its pleasures thou'lt be tasting."

The song over, Jan, his parents, Mat the matchmaker, the best men, the fiddlers, the bass-player and all the Szarfania guests, including Simon Esquire, Frycek and Dominik, with music and cheering, entered the bride's home, asking for her. The whole night before the men of the party had been celebrating the "last bachelor drink" of Jan, but in spite of that they were fresh and merry.

And now Kate appeared and was surrounded by her bridesmaids. She carried the "rod," which the chief bridesmaid took from her and presented to the chief best man, while the bridesmaids sang an ancient song, invoking not only Lada, but Lelum, the god of love (the Cupid of the Slavs):—

*(Moderately quick.)*

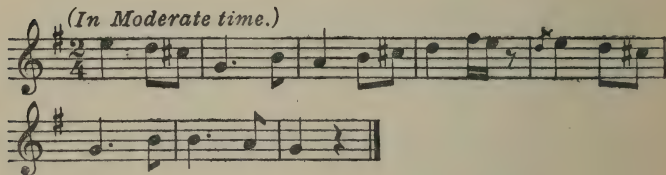
“ In Cracow town  
Our garland green was growing.  
Lelum Lado !  
In Sandomir  
Our kerchiefs they were sewing,  
Lelum Lado.

Sandomir people  
Met them on the way.  
What are you bearing  
Turkish lords to-day?

Oh, with wondrous gifts we're laden—  
A rue garland for a maiden.

Hand over the wreath without delaying,  
Lelum Lado !  
That there be no more grief or praying—  
Lelum Lado."

But the bride, Kate, tried to get back the rod from the chief best man and during the struggle the best men and bridesmaids sang, answering each other :—



"What's thy wreath made of, maiden, maiden?  
What's thy wreath made of, tell me true?"

"Why dost thou ask me, stupid Johnny?  
A maiden's wreath is ever of rue."

Kate won in the struggle with the chief best man, but her victory was short-lived. Her bridegroom took it from her, while the bridesmaids sang in her mother's name :—

“ Take thy wreath, oh daughter mine, and be faring.  
Take thy wreath, oh daughter mine, for wearing,  
Go to him for whom now thou’rt caring ! ”

But the tables were set for a meal near the stove. They were covered with white, homespun linen cloths, on which were set out home-made bread, cakes, cheese, butter, honey, preserves, pots of beer, bottles of whiskey and a bottle of mead for the manor guests. The assistant best men and the bridesmaids had to look after everybody, to see that the guests were well supplied with food and that all their wishes were fulfilled. The ladies of the manor had not appeared. They would only come to the church to say a few kind words to the wedded pair, but the boys and the "resident" were given the best places at the table and proudly decked with rosemary twigs and ribbons. In spite of the earliness of the hour, they were doing full justice to the fare set before them.

Breakfast over, the bridegroom marshalled the guests for church, putting everyone in his place. Meanwhile the bridesmaids were singing in Kate's name :—

"Stand by the table, mother dear, my mother  
I'll ask the pardon before all other.  
Stand there, my bridesmaids, like flowers in a garden.  
I ere my wedding will ask for pardon."

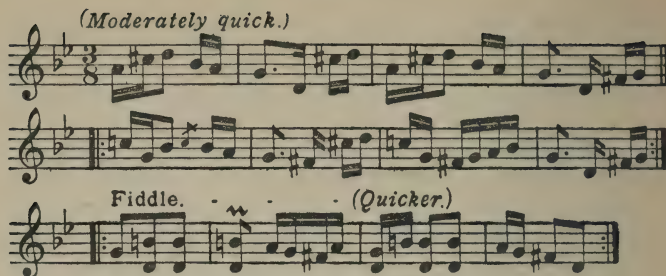
"Leave not thy home dear though guests be pressing,  
Till thou hast knelt low, asking my blessing.  
Kitty my dearest, while thou art kneeling  
To God in heaven for thee I'm appealing!"

Then Mat cleared his throat and delivered a speech, or rather a sermon, which he ended by urging the bridal pair to thank their parents for their up-bringing and by calling down the blessing of God on Jan and Kate.

There followed a pathetic ceremony. Hand in hand the bride and the bridegroom went round to all the guests, beginning with those from Szafarnia manor and their own parents, embracing their knees and repeating the words :—

"God repay you!"

But the time had come to be off to the church. As they crossed the threshold of the cottage on their way out to the yard, the best men sang :—



“Thou’rt ours no longer, sweet maiden  
Now thou art given in marriage.  
Three horses here have come for thee  
Yea, and a brave wedding carriage.

and the bridesmaids took up the strain :—

“Now you are ours, boy, no longer,  
Now you’ll forsake us, forsake us.  
You have a grey horse, a grey horse,  
A brown and a grey horse will take us.”

But Mother Ciszewska, according to ritual custom, stopped the guests on their way out and sprinkled everyone with holy water from a plate she held. Kate’s father meanwhile gave the young couple some bread and salt, which they placed inside their dresses, on their breasts. Then Jan took Kate’s hand and led her towards her cart. The fiddlers played sadly ; and the best men and bridesmaids sang :—

“When she on the cart was seated,  
“Father, mother,” she repeated  
Don’t let me be taken, mother  
Don’t you let me go.”

But her mother answered fair  
“Daughter, daughter of my care—  
God beside you guard and guide you—  
To your wedding ride !”

Then Jan put the bride, the bridesmaids, the women matchmakers and the fiddlers on the first cart. In the second sat the manor guests and the parents. The other guests took places as they willed. Beside the carts rode the best men. The procession was led by Jan and the man matchmaker on grey mares. While riding in front, Jan



was also accompanied by the chief best man, who held high the wedding "rod." The horses had their manes plaited with coloured ribbon and their tails tied with red tape.

In the gateway of Kate's house, an axe had been placed with the sharp side of the blade inwards. When passing through, the procession carefully avoided touching it, as to do so would bring misfortune on the bridal pair. Simon Esquire explained to the boys from the manor, with some scorn, that this was a heathen custom still kept to by the peasant folk.

Ciszevski's cottage stood a little outside the village, and the carts quickened their speed as soon as they got out of the gate. They had gone but a little way, however, when the best man called a halt, rode round the carts three times and, standing before the two front carts said :—

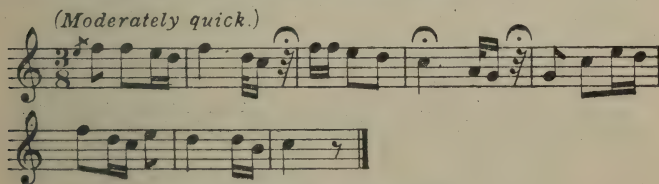
"May the Lord be praised !"

"Look," said Simon Esquire, in a low voice to the boys, "How stubbornly these peasants keep to their own ways. There are no wild beasts to be met on the road now, but they do just the same as when there were."

But the boys scarcely listened to him. They were watching the best man, who had challenged the bridegroom to a race, saying :

"Let's see which is the greatest gallant—the bridegroom, the matchmaker, or I myself."

In a moment the three were off, their many-coloured ribbons and shawls flying till they looked like great, fantastic birds flying down the dusty, grey road. The fiddlers struck up a tune and then the bridesmaids commenced singing at the top of their voices :—



"Rowan bridge, break not—  
Keep thy wood from bending,  
Oh Lado, Lado, Lado, Lado !"

At these words, Simon Esquire crossed himself and turning his head aside, spat spitefully on to the road (so greatly did the mention of the heathen goddess excite his indignation and scorn) to the great merriment of the boys. But the bridesmaids continued unmoved :

“ For towards thee swiftly  
A wedding brave is tending,  
Oh Lado, Lado, Lado, Lado !

Brave is the wedding  
Brave the best men going,  
Oh Lado, Lado, Lado, Lado !

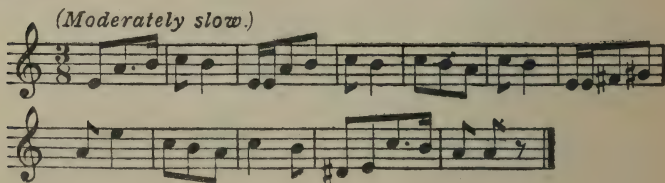
Ere the morn breaks there  
Hear the cock loud crowing,  
Oh Lado, Lado, Lado, Lado !

But the bride's maiden  
Ere the dawn is breaking,  
Oh Lado, Lado, Lado, Lado !

For her wedding comrade  
A 'broidered shirt is making,  
Oh Lado, Lado, Lado, Lado, !

Already the three riders who had gone on in front had returned to the procession. The best man rode three times round the cart once more and gave the signal to move forward. In a few minutes the sloping roofs of the church were visible. Then again the best man clapped his legs against the horse's sides and rushed forwards till he reached the church gate. There a crowd of villagers had assembled. He rode round them, gave them due greeting, and returned to his procession, which he then led up to the church gate at a round trot.

As they drove up to the church the bridesmaids sang sadly :—



“ Lovely wild pinks and sprightly tulips blooming  
Where, where is he for whom my love’s consuming ?

Say did they take him far o’er wave-paths weary ?  
My heart is aching sorely for my dearie.

Ye learned star-gazers that the stars are knowing  
Say do ye know where my true love is going ?

Yes maid we saw him mournful watches keeping  
His eyes were dim with comfortless long weeping.”

Simon Esquire, mightily disgruntled at the shaking of the cart, of which he had by this time had enough, said to the boys, who had joined in the song :—

“ Maybe you believe that astronomers would worry about a yokel’s love-making ? ”

“ We’re sure they would,” exclaimed the boys and jumped out of the cart to help the women to descend. This was no easy matter, for the carts were embowered in branches stuck at the side to keep the dust away. But at last everyone was out and the chief best man marshalled his charges into the church. The men were placed on the left side. Simon Esquire and the boys went to the Szafarnia manor pew, just inside the chancel.

Kate, the bride, knelt before the high altar with her bridesmaids and the women matchmakers, and Jan stood between the best man and Mat Czaj. The church behind them was full of farmers in their Sunday best, each with a red handkerchief hanging out of the pocket of his long coat and with a sprig of rosemary in the high cap each held in his hand. High mass was celebrated and when it was over the marriage ceremony began.

When the priest bound the hands of Jan and Kate together with his stole, the boys remarked that, on a sign from Mother Skvara, Kate tried to get her hand on the top of Jan’s, so as to secure the upper hand over her husband in married life. Not succeeding, she managed, however, to get her knee on the flap of Jan’s long coat which, though not so good, was something.

As the ceremony ended there was heard the sound of a carriage drawing up before the church. The ladies of the manor, with Mrs. Dzievanovska, at their head, met the

newly married pair and blessed them. Each of the wedding guests embraced, according to custom, the knees of the squire's wife, whose importance for the moment eclipsed that of Simon Esquire, who stood aside, maintaining, however, his air of pompous dignity.

Then the parish priest came up to greet Mrs. Dzievanovska and the ladies, and asked them to take cakes and wine in the presbytery. The boys, who were also invited, boisterously refused, saying that for this day they were only peasants, and Mrs. Dzievanovska asked Simon Esquire to his evident discontent, to accompany them to the wedding feast, but not to stay too late and not to allow them by any means to drink.

"But there's mead specially for Mr. Simon and us," shouted the boys, and the priest said with a laugh to Mrs. Dzievanovska: "Blood will out, beneficent lady."

The priest and the ladies disappeared towards the presbytery. But now the bridegroom was seen coming out of the vestry. The fiddlers struck up and the bridesmaids began to sing:—

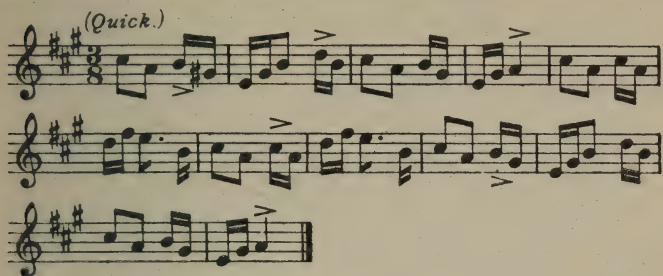
"Fruit gold and red the cherry trees yield,  
A periwinkle blooms beneath.  
Cease to repine, mother of mine—  
New hands to the field,  
Now I am wed,  
My bride has doffed her bridal wreath."

"Fruit gold and red the cherry trees yield,  
A rowan, blooming, grows beneath.  
Cease to repine, mother of mine,  
The church bells have pealed,  
Now I am wed,  
To-day I doffed my bridal wreath."

So, with cheering and singing, the whole company returned to the carts. Simon Esquire and the boys were shown to places in the bride's cart, where the matchmaker women were also to sit. The boys scrambled between the branches, into the golden straw of which the cart was full, but Simon Esquire this time refused point blank to sit in the cart with a pack of women and went to the cart of the senior farmers, to honour them with his presence. Again



the procession moved off, gathering speed to a full gallop, Jan and his companions ahead on horseback as before. The matchmaker women sang in their high-pitched voices :



“ Now they’re bringing  
Her with singing—  
Oh my dainty, oh my dear !

Where they’ll throw her  
Or bestow her  
'Tis a pity for to hear.

Now they’re bringing  
Her with singing  
Oh my dainty, oh my dear ! ”

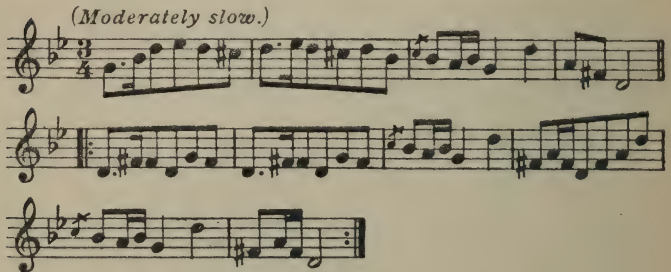
Suddenly the chief best man reined in his horse so hard that he threw it back on its haunches. The cart was stopped and the chief matchmaker man solemnly presented Jan with a flail and the bride with a shuttle and a little spindle. Jan waved his flail two or three times round his head and pretended to ride away, but he was brought back by the best men. Some ears of corn had been taken out of the sheaf Kate was sitting on, and he had, amid general laughter, to give a specimen of his threshing. Meanwhile Kate was pretending to spin, and the matchmaker women in the cart with her were giving pieces of cake to the village children who had followed the procession in the hope of such largesse.

Meanwhile the fiddles were playing their best and when the little ceremony was over, the procession moved on again, gathering speed till it reached the gate of the bride’s yard, which the carts passed through at full gallop, none

of them touching the axe that lay in the gateway. Once within, Jan jumped from his horse and turned the edge of the axe outwards so as to keep away the evil spirits that lurk about, waiting to get into the festive dwelling. The worst of these spirits are little rose bushes, wreathed in straw, holding strange little fiddles, which they play and play and all the guests dance to their music until they die.

Mother Ciszewska, who had hurried first out of her cart, appeared at the doorway of the cottage, with her husband beside her, ready to present the wedded pair with bread and salt, but Kate, in the company of the matchmaker women, had gone to the cowhouse, carrying the sheaf of corn on which she had been sitting, and which she threw under her favourite red cow. Then she came back with her companions, and, hand in hand with Jan, and with the boys one on each side, entered the house, taking bread and salt from her parents on the way. As she and her husband passed the threshold they cried, "May the Lord be praised."

And now there was a pause, while the company cleaned itself from the dust of the road, before sitting down to the midday meal. When that was over, and the tables were cleared away, and the floor swept by the bridesmaids, the chief best man rose with the rod in his hand and commenced with the bride the first solemn polonaise, singing :

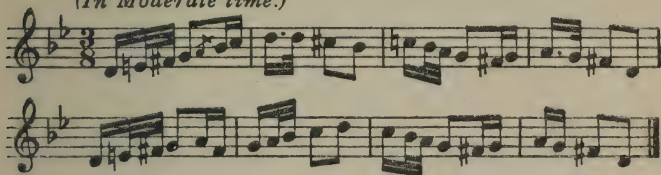


" Who, oh who's that maiden—  
One 'mid all the others—  
Who is dancing so lightly ? "

" Your praise I'm not needing  
In all eyes I'm reading  
That my dancing is sprightly."

Behind came Frycek with the chief bridesmaid and Dominik with Kate's cousin, Baska. Simon Esquire, who had refused to take part in the dancing, sat and drank mead with the old farmers, displaying his wisdom about crops and the cattle. The procession of dancers, like a long, coloured serpent, made its way slowly round and round the room, the men changing partners as they danced. The first polonaise tune gave place to another :—

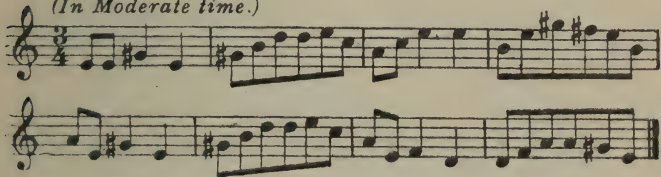
*(In Moderate time.)*



" Dark the night clouds in the sky maid,  
Shadow the way I am going.  
Lead me onward, gentle maiden,  
Guidance bestowing, bestowing ! "

and yet another :—

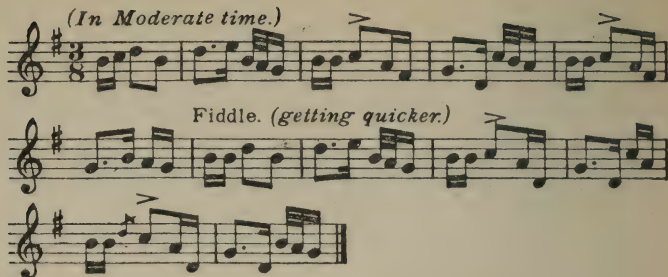
*(In Moderate time.)*



" If I met with that poor maiden flitting  
I'd embrace her with one arm unwitting.

If by chance I didn't see her mother  
I'd embrace her quickly with the other."

After the polonaise, Frycek's well-loved dance, the Kuyaviak, commenced, and the bride chose him for her partner. The fiddles played the well-known tune to the words :—



"Where the lake's bright water's shining  
Sat a maiden, sad, repining.  
Three small birds that perched anear her  
Chirp'd her lov'd one'd come to cheer her.

"Love is love, but whom love swayeth  
Pays love's price and love betrayeth.  
I, unwise, love's price have given.  
Head and heart with pain are riven."

So she wept, no comfort taking,  
Head and heart with grief were aching,  
Head and heart with grief were laden,  
"Johnny loves another maiden."

"Loves another, me is leaving,  
Her doth cherish, me is grieving.  
My beloved hath bereft me—  
For a wreath of rue he's left me."

"Let him love without regretting—  
With the Lord there's no forgetting,  
Who the bird in dark woods keepeth  
Will remember her that weepeth."

. . . . .

Trumpets calling, dogs loud greeting—  
"Look there, Mary, whom they're meeting.  
Look there, Mary, if he's riding  
Who has won my love abiding."

"Down the hill his way he's keeping,  
See his charger 'neath him leaping.  
To the cottage yard he's coming,  
On the cottage window drumming."

" Art thou sleeping, art thou waking  
Or thy heart for me is breaking ? "  
" I'm awake but I'm not weeping  
Nor vain watches for thee keeping."

" Let thy window light be burning,  
I depart, not soon returning.  
Horses wait. I'd fain be riding,  
In God's care be thou abiding."

" Fain I'd in the grave be lying  
Ere I hearken'd thy denying.  
Fain I'd sleep and never waken  
With the burden I have taken."

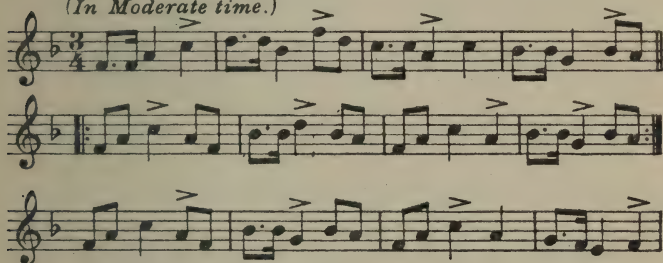
" Call not, Kitty, death to save thee  
From the burden that I gave thee.  
Heavier is thy wreath I'm bearing  
Than the babe that thou'lt be caring.

" Brief that burden on thee lying—  
Passing with the years' swift flying.  
From thy wreath I ne'er can sever,  
Rests it on my soul for ever.

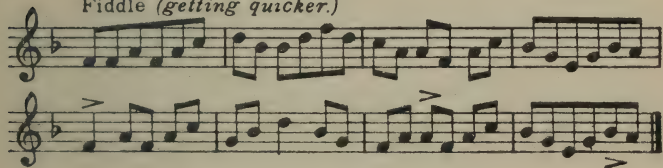
" When God's trump the graves is breaking  
And the dead from death are waking,  
Still, despite my vain despairing  
Thy rue garland I'll be wearing.

In honour of Frycek, the Mazur, who danced so well,  
a mazurka was next sung and danced to the tune of :—

*(In Moderate time.)*



*Fiddle (getting quicker.)*





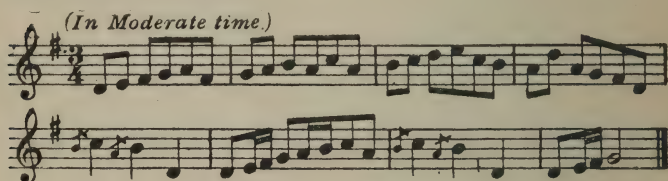
" Now Mazury  
Keep on bounding  
Iron heels  
On hard wood sounding.

And thou Kitty  
Dance though weary  
Lest thy legs  
Grow crooked, dearie !

Round about  
In circle whirling  
Gaily all the  
Folk are twirling.

Then the Mazur's  
Joy's abounding  
When in dance his  
Heels are sounding.

and then an obertas :—



" Don't come near the cartwheel  
With the axle playing.  
Don't let Johnny kiss thee  
Howsoe'er he's praying."

" How can I say nay, dear,  
If he sweetly pray, dear ?  
Kiss me, kindly praising—  
My fall'n kerchief raising."

The dancing waxed fast and furios. Kuyaviaks, obertases, mazurkas and even Krakoviaks were danced. All the windows and the door were open to let in a fresh breeze from outside, but Simon Esquire at last could stand the heat no longer, and wanted to force the boys to leave. The sound of the wheels of the Szafarnia gig lent weight to his urging. But in vain he showed on his huge "turnip" that it was nearly ten o'clock. Frycek and

Dominik hung round his neck. The bride and bridegroom and the whole wedding party added their entreaties imploring the "most honourable gentleman" to remain for supper and for the "capping" ceremony. At the mention of the "capping" Simon's brow clouded over, but quick Frycek, who knew that he was thinking of his empty pocket, showed him in the palm of his hand a bright, new thaler, which Mrs. Dzievanovska had given the boys for the bride's gift for her capping.

At last a chair was placed in the alcove, where it was cooler, for "the most honourable gentleman" Simon Esquire, and a new bottle of mead was opened for him. The mayor of the village came in to keep him company, and the boys disappeared again into the motley crowd of dancers.

But now, on a sign from the chief best man, the dancing stopped, the best men brought in the tables and benches and the bridesmaids and matchmaker women fetched china plates, painted in bright colours. They next brought in enormous delft tureens containing as many pieces of meat as there were guests.

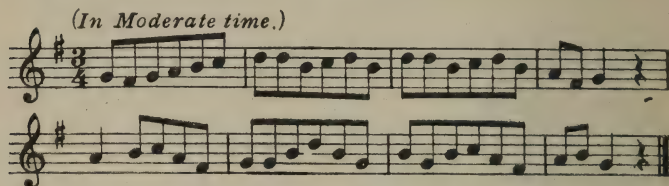
The guests took their places on the benches, grace was said, and the dishes that succeeded each other were rapidly cleared. There was broth with beans or soup made of duck's blood, roast pork, millet and buckwheat with plums, boiled pork chopped up small, with cabbage (a dish that had been cooking for three days, the famous national "bigos"). As the dishes passed from the cook to the best man and from him to the bridesmaids and on to the guests, jests were made and the fiddlers were encouraged to play louder. Even the boys, fortunately not noticed by Simon Esquire, half asleep after his potations of mead, were shouting loudly :—



"Keep on, cooks, the good food sending  
We can eat it without ending."

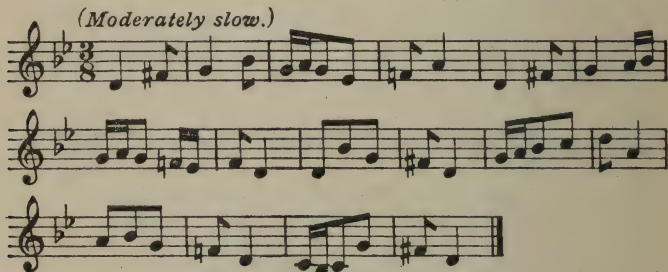
If Mrs. Chopin had seen Fryderyk eating huge platefuls of peasant dishes—he who always had to be pampered with the most delicate food at home—she would have opened her eyes in wonder.

When the bridesmaids appeared with tureens of millet they were greeted with the song :—



“ Millet I was sowing  
For my summer growing  
‘Neath an oak tree.  
A grey dove descreying  
Swiftly came flying,  
Nought’s left for me.”

Then a pause came between the dishes, for it was time for the matchmaker women to sing their song :—



“ Before the manor a grass-plot was spreading,  
With a peacock, a maid there was treading.  
Grazing time ended, to herd him home she tended—  
Gently, cheerly, with kindly words befriended.

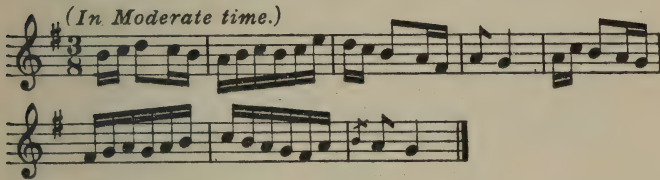
She hurt his wing with her small rod unwilling,  
The peacock escaped to the forest loud shrilling.  
“ Oh, foolish Kitty, what hast thou been doing?  
The peacock’s hurt wing thou shalt ever be rueing.”

. . . . .

Before the manor a green dyke is rising,  
There walks a maiden of beauty surprising.  
A shift with black stitches all sewn she is wearing,  
A babe on her arm she is tenderly bearing.

" Kate, little Kate, a glass of mead drain me,  
This son of mine thou shalt carefully train me.  
Kate, little Kate, now this good brandy drink me  
That a good fellow thou ever mayst think me."

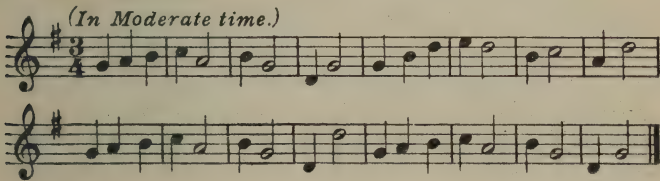
The bigos was greeted with another song :—



" Let the good food go freely round the table,  
A hundred leaves to eat we're able.

When a hundred leaves we've taken  
Thanks shall hundred echoes waken."

Next the bridesmaids sang the "Song of the rowan tree."



" Why, rowan tree, dost not grow up high ?  
Say dost thou fear thy roots be dry ?"

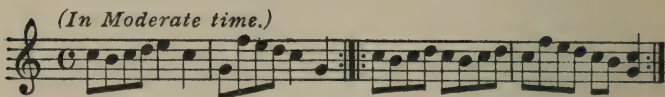
" I would not stand in the valley here  
If now the fell drought I did not fear.

" I would stand on the mountain there,  
I would look at the maple fair."

" Rowan tree come to the wood so dim,  
The nightingale sings her evening hymn.

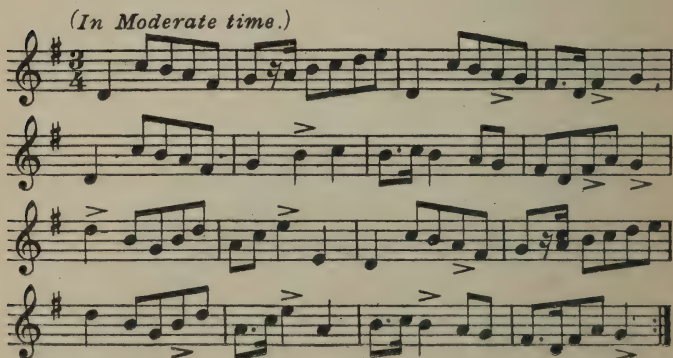
" The nightingale's sighing for Kitty is crying—  
For Johnny has taken the wreath I was tying."

When there were, at last, no more dishes to bring, the cook appeared with a basin of water and towels for the guests to wash their hands, and as thanks, each guest threw a coin into the water. Then the best man stood up to give thanks for the meal :—

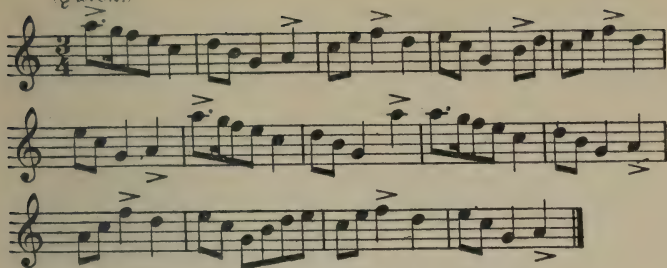
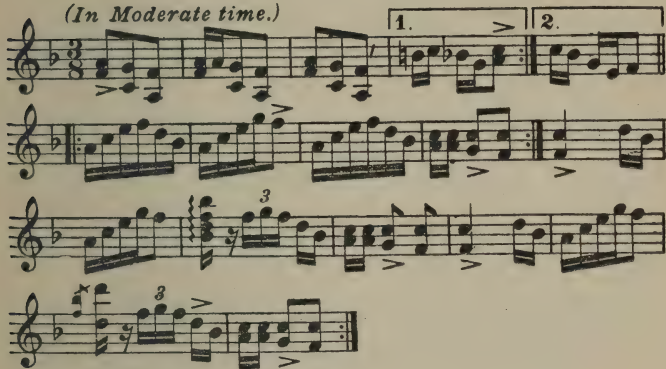
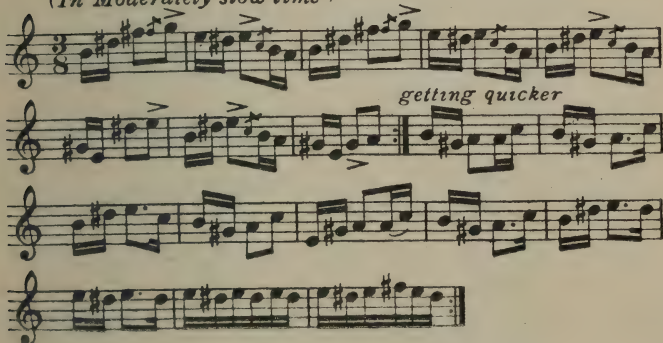


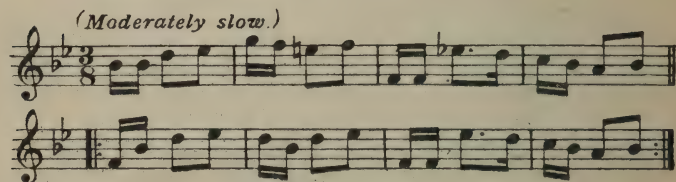
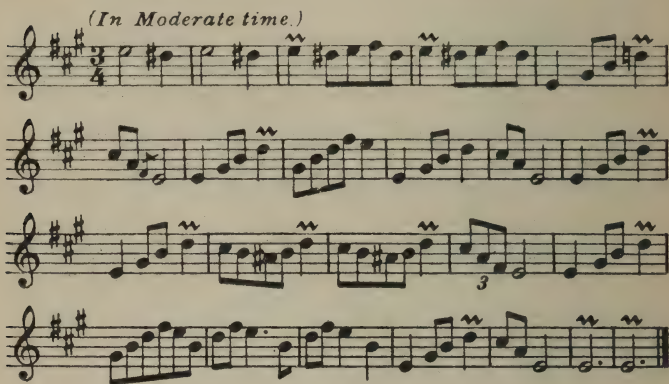
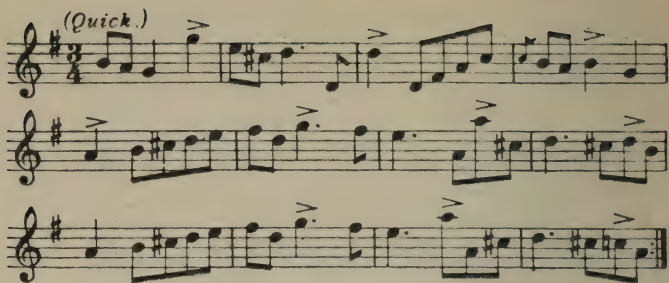
“ Rise, 'one with another,  
 Friend, witness and brother,  
 For our entertainment  
 Let's thank God to-day.  
 Thank we our good host  
 Who us has invited.  
 Our hostess who  
 Her guests has delighted.  
 For our good dinner  
 Hip, hip, hurray ! ”

After dinner the most lively dancing began. The fiddlers and the bass-player bowed and fingered with might and main, the windows of the cottage shook and it seemed at times as if the whole place would come down about the company's ears.





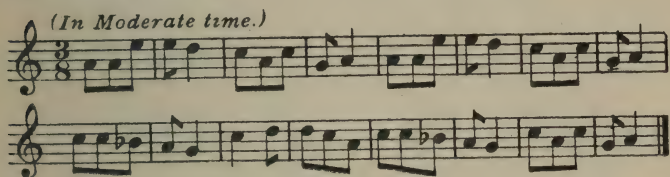
*(Quick.)**(In Moderate time.)**(In Moderately slow time)*



Simon Esquire who had retired again to the alcove, fell sound asleep with his head on the pillow, which mother Ciszewska had kindly slipped behind. The gig driver was replaced for a while by one of the company, who quickly took the horses out and led them to the stable, where a good meal of hay was placed before them. It was in vain that the groom repeated that "The honourable lady had

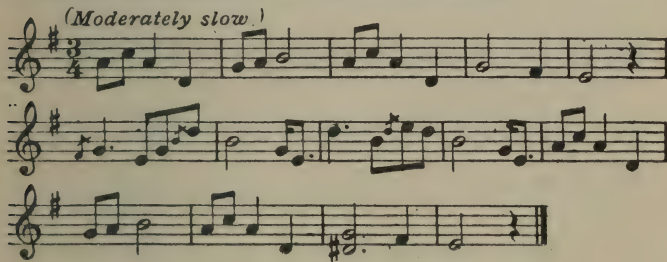
bidden the young gentlemen not to be late." He was enticed in himself to "see how nicely the honourable young gentlemen were dancing," was well treated to whiskey and engaged in a lively conversation with some of the bridesmaids who were standing near the door.

But it was nearly midnight and the "capping" ceremony was due to take place. The chief matchmaker woman came round with a plate on which lay two little wedding wreaths and, beginning with the manor boys, collected coins for the bride's "cap." Meanwhile the bridesmaids sang :—



" Out to the garden, comely, merry  
Went little Kitty, our red berry.  
With herself was counsel taking  
Of what herbs her wreath she's making.  
Of three herbs her wreath she's weaving,  
Till the wedding aside is leaving.  
From Sunday till, next Sunday morn,  
Jack's friends come walking through the corn.  
With periwinkles the maid did make it  
And from her hands her dear lad did take it."

But now the fiddlers struck up "the maid's last dance," and the best man took out the bride. As she danced before all the company the bridesmaids sang :—



" A bride my mother sent me  
To foreign lands far lying,  
Despite my sad crying.

" No more be returning  
Despite thy vain yearning."

" I'll come swiftly winging  
A little lark singing  
To my mother I'll fly,  
To her window swift flitting  
In a rue wreath be sitting  
On a lily bush nigh.

My youngest sister—  
My youngest and fairest,  
Will hunt me far, crying :

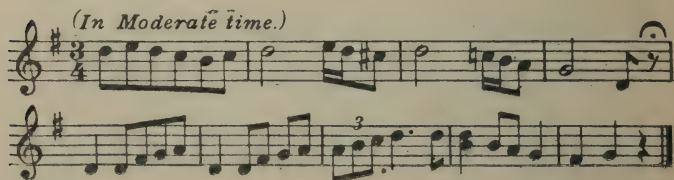
" Hence, small bird that dardest—  
Poor lark of an hour—  
To break sister's sweet flower."

" I shall tear and break it—  
Splinters small will make it.  
I sowed it and shall take it."

" Oh thou to befriend thee  
Hast mother to tend thee—  
With mother dost stay,  
But I've none to tend me,  
Must dwell far away.

Oh, God's high above me,  
Far all that do love me,  
Is there one who is caring ?  
Field creatures low lying  
And little birds flying  
Through the world me'll be bearing."

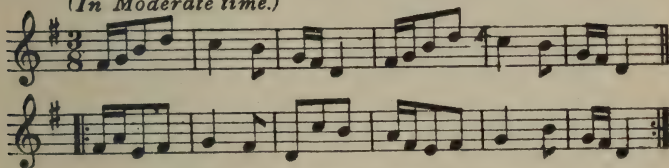
Meanwhile the matchmakers were looking for a moment in which to seize the dancing bride for their own. But the bridesmaids hid her, coming between her and them, and the bridegroom himself defended her. A struggle ensued, in which Frycek Chopin and Dominik Dzievanovski took an active and merry part, but the matchmakers won, and pulled their prey into the adjoining room, singing:—



"To the net, my dear Kitty, come quickly.  
No more shall thy tresses shine thickly."

Frycek and Dominik, peeping through a crack in the door, with the best men close behind them, saw the bride sitting on a stool and pretending to cry bitterly, while the matchmaker women took off her bridal wreath. Then the door opened quickly and forcefully, just for a moment, sending the whole crowd of men and boys staggering backwards, and the chief matchmaker woman, Mother Skvara, handed the wreath to the best man. The bridesmaids at this struck up a song:—

*(In Moderate time.)*

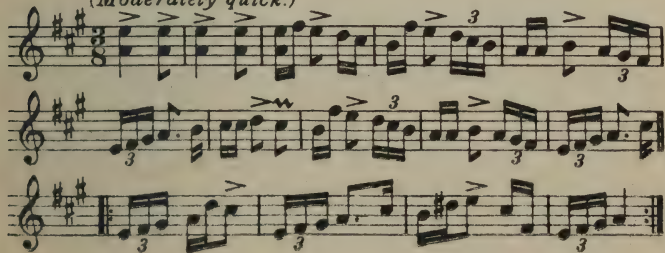


"Oh, my rosemary sweet blowing  
I in garden beds was sowing.  
I was sowing, I was taking  
And a wreath for me was making.  
Now no more I'll thee be caring,  
I'll no more a wreath be wearing.  
Maid no longer, now I'm wedded—  
In the alcove safely bedded."

"See, a cap my curls doth cover—  
Husband, who was once my lover!"

As the song ended, the matchmaker women put a cap of shining tissue on Kate's head and the best men outside the door joined in song with all the other men of the company. The song they sang was one beloved by Frycek, who afterwards immortalized it in his "Variations on Polish themes."

*(Moderately quick.)*





"Once from Torun, ganders herding,  
Johnny was going, was going,  
When her fair face through the window  
Kitty was showing, was showing.

"Come in Johnny, come in to me  
I've good mead to-day.  
I will greet you, I will treat you,  
Give you for your way."

Johnny, jumping, lost his balance,  
Hurt sore his poor leg.  
Most unhappy now, he's calling  
"Do help me I beg."

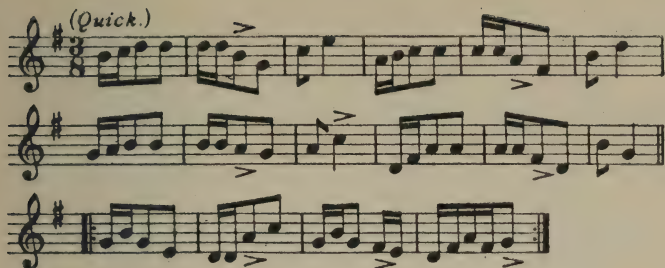
"Go now, Kitty, bring the doctor  
With him Master too.  
If the doctor will not come, dear,  
Come the faster you !

"Make my bed here fair and smoothly,  
In the room near thee,  
Sit thou then dear close beside me  
I will cheerful be."

"I may make thy bed so smoothly  
But I'll not sit there.  
Thy poor leg would burn with fever  
That thou could'st not bear."

"Needless is your warning, Kitty,  
Needless is your warning.  
I will kiss you and caress you  
Till to-morrow morning."

As the last words of the song sounded the door opened and the matchmaker women led Kitty out in her married woman's dress. The best man, with the rod in his hand, holding it high up and shaking it, began to dance with her. But the matchmaker women again tried to catch her and the whole company danced the "chasing dance" to the tune of "The Quail," so well known to Frycek and all Polish children, for they sing it and dance to it in their nurseries with their peasant nurses.



" See her quickly disappearing  
Flying.  
I behind her running barefoot  
Crying.

Tell me, tell me, oh quail mother  
Duly  
May I take her, hold and keep her  
Truly.

" Catch her while she in the millet  
Lingers.  
Only see her feathers touch not  
Fingers.

" How can I, oh my quail mother,  
Clutch her,  
If I may not with my fingers  
Touch her ? "

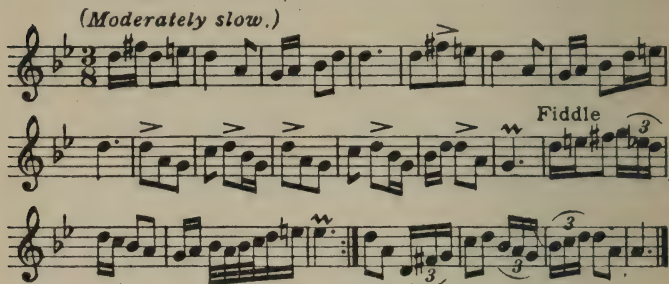
Then the quail with tiny feathers  
Mounted  
Ever skyward to a height  
Uncounted.

" Little quail thus lightly mounting  
Higher  
Have a care now lest thy small wings  
Tire."

When the dance ended the struggle for the bride continued. Simon Esquire, awakened by the noise, looked at his turnip, and with horror saw that the small hours had already commenced. He rushed, not too steadily, into the other room and bellowed out :

" Frycek ! Dominik ! "

■ But his voice was drowned in the victory song of the matchmaker women, who had seized the bride again :—



“ Hop gaily twining,  
Buoyantly spreading,  
Thou must be present  
At every wedding.

Oh, poor hop  
Thou must go  
Up so high  
Down so low,  
So high and  
So low ! ”

This song (without which no Polish wedding is complete) seemed to the ears of poor Simon Esquire like the yelling of fiends in hell, for not only his head was aching, and not only did he realise that he had transgressed Mrs. Dzievanovska's commands, but, worst of all, the horses had been kept standing and he would have to face Mr. Dzievanovski's wrath.

But neither Dominik nor Frycek were thinking of what would happen to-morrow. Dominik was dancing wildly and Frycek was drowned in the delight of that melody which, only a few years later, he was to improvise on to an excited audience of musical experts in Vienna at his first concert abroad.

All the same, Simon Esquire was a personage from the manor, and, as such, consideration was due to him. The chief reason of his excitement was guessed at, for Mr Dzievanovski's care of his horses was notorious all over the countryside. The groom was at once brought before

him and assured him that the horses were comfortably stabled, and, as he himself was minded to stay longer, he added that it would be far better for the young gentlemen, who were hot and perspiring from their exertions, not to leave the party immediately, but to wait till sunrise, and then, too, when all the gates in the manor were open, the arrival would be unnoticed.

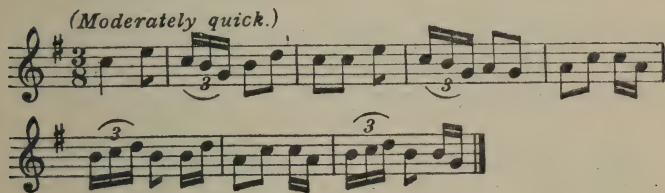
Simon Esquire's not too clear brain was completely quieted and Mother Ciszewska had a good, hot plateful of soup before him in a moment.

And now Jan, who had won his bride in the gay struggle with all comers, stood before the fiddlers with her and sang

"O give me, my Lord Jesus, good luck with her!"

and, turning to Kate, he caught her to him and cried:—

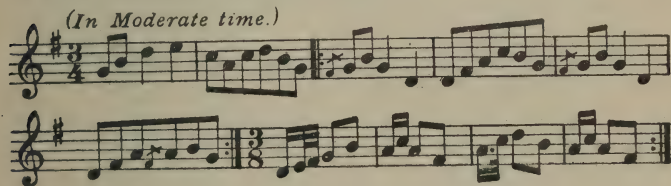
"Together now, my wife, please come with me!"  
Then he broke into song:—



"Now thou'rt mine forever, joined is our endeavour.  
Service freely giving, for each other living!"

After that husband and wife went round to everyone, beginning again with the manor boys and the parents to thank them, embracing their legs in deep humility, for their presence at the wedding.

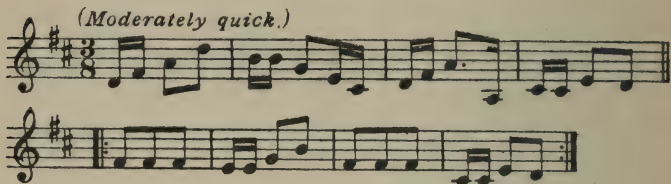
When this was over the senior farmers' wives took the bride again and one by one danced very slowly with her to the tune played by the fiddlers:—



"Forget thou quickly thy wilful days, maiden—  
Hasten, oh wife, to the field for toil laden.

Forget thou quickly thy dancing days, girlie.  
Thy goodman calls thee to bring breakfast early!"

Then the old farmers had their turn and Frycek and Dominik joined in their merry chorus:—



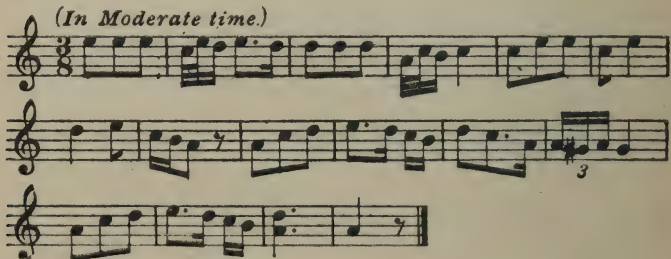
Sought an implet walnuts growing  
Wife behind with bellows going.  
He, he, he, walnuts growing!

He: The time is ripe to dance in.  
She: I have no wreath to prance in.  
He: If you've no garland, take it.  
She: I've nought wherewith to make it.  
He: Of burdocks you can weave it.  
She: There's none who will receive it.

Frycek and Dominik had their turn with the farmer's lads while the music played and all sang:—

"Shines the cold moon without heating,  
Quick my heart with love is beating."

The dawn had already broadened and the first rays of the rising sun were shining in through the cottage windows. The bridesmaids burst again into song and the dancing ceased.

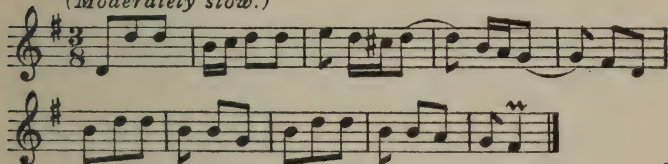




" Little black swallow  
 Why art thou making  
 Nest o'er my bed so meetly ?  
 Wert thou thus bidden  
 By thy winged mother  
 Or dost thou guard me sweetly ?  
 Thou canst not guard me  
 Little black swallow,  
 Vainly thy bright eyes spy me.  
 Food for thy nestlings  
 Thou wilt be seeking,  
 I shall have Johnny by me."

When the song was ended the old farmers, already outside the door, warned the company that it was time to go with their deep voices, singing :—

*(Moderately slow.)*

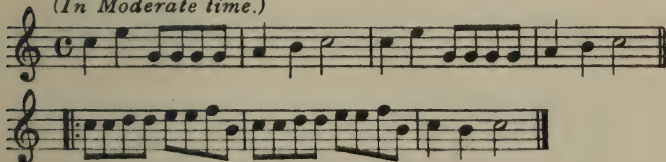


" Time to go back now, wedding comrades—  
 Let's go back !  
 Far is our faring, thick is the forest,  
 Rough the track !

" Time to go back now, wedding comrades—  
 Let's go back !  
 Deep is the water, dark is the forest,  
 Long the track ! "

But now the gig appeared before the door, this time in earnest. Simon Esquire, Frycek and Dominik, escorted from the door by the bride and bridegroom and the wedding guests, got in, and, to the sound of cheering, moved off along the road towards Szafarnia, followed by the strains of the parting song :—

*(In Moderate time.)*



“ Cheer, my brother comrades, loud and clear  
And the young bride so dainty cheer.  
Shouting cheerly all hurray  
For all our fellow guests to-day.  
Long live they ! ”

It was full day when the gig arrived at Szafarnia. Simon Esquire and the boys slunk in by a back door and hastened to their rooms. At breakfast time they were all three deep in slumber, and, when they awoke at noon, Frycek and Dominik were prepared for a sound rating for coming home at such an unearthly hour for young men of their ages. But good Mrs. Dzievanovska, seeing they were sound and merry, not only forgave them and Simon Esquire, but promised them to ask the squire to give them horses to go to Bochemiec and be present, three days later, at the ceremonies accompanying Kate's removal to Szafarnia, to her new home.

## CHAPTER V

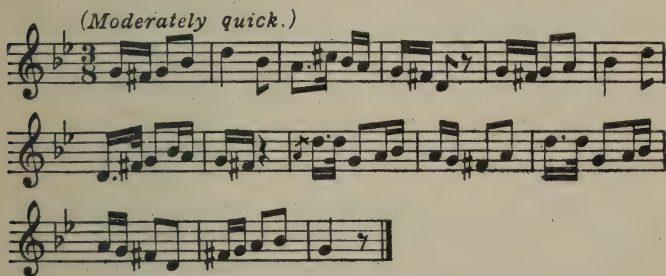
ON the third day, to the great joy and pride of old Ciszewski, the Szafarnia gig reappeared before his cottage door with Frycek and Dominik sitting by themselves, trusted to come with no company but the groom who drove.

As they drove up the best men were assembled before the cottage and were singing gaily to Jan :—

“ Quick harness, quick harness, quick harness  
Thy horses grey sir !  
Fortune thou shalt bring to-day sir !

And what is the fortune of thy wife pretty ?  
Two bean-sheaves and straw he will get with Kitty.”

The boys jumped out of the gig, to be greeted with respectful joy by the farmers, but Frycek dived into the cottage, attracted by the melody that came from it—the matchmaker women were singing to Kitty, the new-made wife :—



“ Mount the cart quickly, my little dearie,  
Nothing will help thee thy weeping weary.  
Nought can aid thee thy sad weeping.  
Cart and horses thou art keeping,  
All, all are waiting.

Frycek refused the stool, respectfully pushed forward for him by old mother Ciszewska, with bows from her and her new-married daughter, for he was absorbed in listening to the bridesmaids reply in the name of the bride :

" Guests of mine, guests of mine, be not so pressing,  
 I have not sought and gained my mother's blessing.  
 Goodbye, mother, who so meetly  
 Trained thy daughter, chid so sweetly,  
 Goodbye my mother !

Again the matchmaker women repeated their refrain :—  
 " Mount the cart quickly " and again the bridesmaids  
 responded :

Guests of mine, guests of mine, be not so pressing.  
 I have not sought and gained my father's blessing.  
 Goodbye father, who so early  
 In the dawning called thy girlie,  
 Thou'lt call no more dear !

But the matchmakers obstinately repeated their call,  
 to which the bridesmaids answered :—

Guests of mine, guests of mine, keep the cart steady,  
 Till I've my sister's kiss I am not ready.  
 Goodbye, sister, who, though chiding  
 Hast for me a love abiding,  
 Goodbye, my dearie.

For the last time the matchmaker's refrain was heard  
 and the bridesmaids sang back :—

Guests of mine, guests of mine, keep the cart steady,  
 Till I've my aunts' farewell I am not ready.  
 Goodbye aunts, though oft you've blamed me—  
 Though unjustly you've defamed me—  
 God keep you ever !"

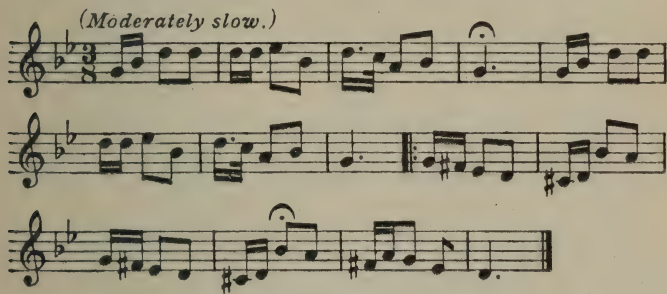
But now the best man boldly entered the room, summon-  
 ing the bride from her home in the matchmaker women's  
 words, repeated in their sounding men's voices, and Kate  
 herself, weeping, replied to them :—

" Fare ye well, fare ye well, gates I was knowing,  
 When a maid, when a maid here I was going.  
 Farewell gates my youth is leaving,  
 Here my wreath I once was weaving,  
 I'll weave no longer."

The carts were now waiting outside the yard gate. The  
 bridesmaids, the best men and the chief matchmaker,  
 Mat, were to go with the young pair to Szafarnia. On a

special cart there had already been loaded a large, painted chest, bright with many colours, a bed, bedding, some wooden stools, a table and other household goods. On yet another cart there were coops of poultry and the cheerful grunting of a sow was heard. Kate was dressed in the cape and hood of a married woman and had long strings of real corals about her neck, with a cross and medals in front.

First the boys from the manor mounted the gig, their peasant hosts sweeping the ground with their hats as they mounted. Then the bride climbed into her long cart, with all her company, and, turning to her mother once more, sang her last wedding song :—



“ Why, oh why, my little mother, gave you me away  
To know housewifery, my mother I’m too young a day.  
Ne’er I tasted this world’s pleasure—  
I have lost my youth’s best treasure—  
Mother, mother mine !

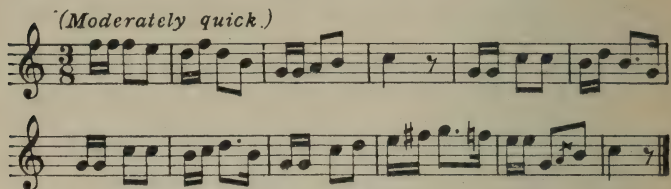
Pleasant ’twas, my little mother, to hear music play  
Underneath our window like the nightingales in May !  
Weird the silence now that’s reigning,  
Given consent thy heart is paining  
Mother, mother mine !

Well you knew, my little mother, that, howe’er it be  
Wedded wife’s for aye resigning her young liberty.  
Pain and bondage on her taking—  
Oft with grief her heart is aching—  
Mother, mother mine !

See already from your farmstead sadly I depart,  
Tears are coming, little mother, from my faithful heart.  
With esteem and love I’m going  
Thanks for all your care bestowing,  
Mother, mother mine ! ”



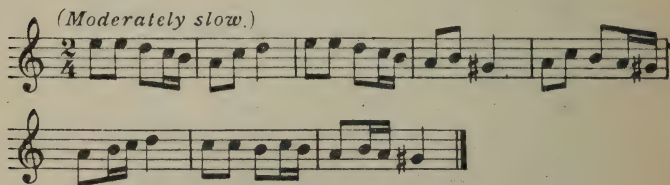
The gig with the boys and the carts started and the fiddlers, who had climbed into the second cart, accompanied the high-pitched voices of the matchmaker women, who were mockingly consoling the bride :—



“ My dear friends so good and pleasant  
What do you advise ?  
I'll resist you, oh da, dana,  
Feign that I don't wish, da dana,  
Only take me now, da dana,  
Only take me now !

Harness now and put in quickly those grey mares of ours  
Let me hasten where are rising Johnny's palace towers,  
Harness now without delaying—  
Let no grief your heart be weighing  
Mother, mother mine ! ”

A burst of laughter from the gig and carts greeted these sallies. Kate (now called Janova, or Jan's wife), shaded her eyes with her arm and the carts were driven at a gallop along the sunny roads. Encouraged by the success of the matchmaker women, the best men started a merry song :—



“ She was boasting  
And declaring  
That eight dresses  
She'd for wearing.  
And she's owning  
Only three.  
In every gather  
A moth I see.”

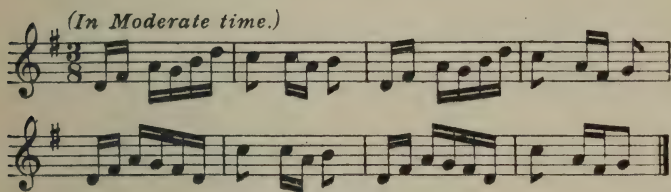
But the bridesmaids, defending Janova's honour,  
burst out :—

“ But little fortune my mother gave me—  
Black, black hair and a white body.

And didst thou find me cast in some byway  
That thou'lt treat me ill this very day ?

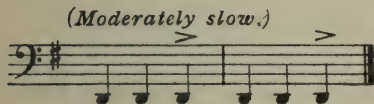
Thou didst find me my mother's roof beneath  
And I was wearing a lavender wreath.”

At the gate of the new home the bridal party was  
greeted by Jan's father and mother, who stood waiting in  
the company of some neighbours with bread and salt.  
After their welcome all entered the cottage and a meal was  
served. But at the end of it the fiddles which, at the  
beginning of the wedding had squeaked shrilly :—



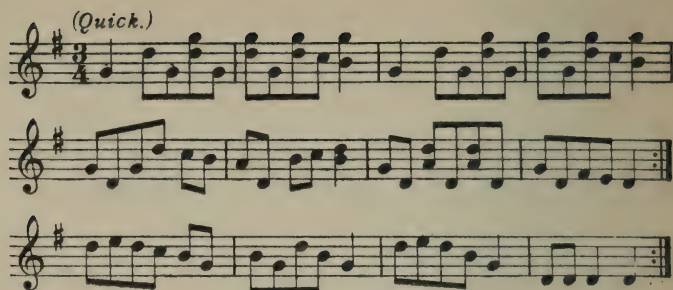
“ We shall be eating, we shall be drinking—  
With joy our cups we'll be clinking.”

to which the double-bass replied with content :—



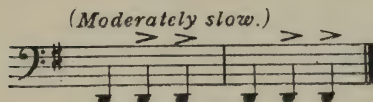
“ As God gives, as God gives.”

now squeaked :—



"They gave us little to eat and drink—  
We must now go home, I think."

and the double-bass concluded :—



"I said so, I said so."

This was a gentle hint for all to leave and Frycek and Dominik, accompanied by the new householders and their guests, went to the gate and mounted their gig for the short drive to the manor. They were followed through the village by a pack of barking dogs that only left them at the manor gates.

. . . . .

Besides these four numbers of the *Szafarski Courier* which are extant, K.W. Wojcicki, the Polish author and a friend of Chopin's family, gives in his biography of Fryderyk's younger sister Emilia, extracts from two other numbers which he had seen, namely those of August 19th and 24th, 1824. He quotes them as follows :—

## HOME NEWS.

On August 15th of the current year at a musical party at Szafarnia at which some persons and half-persons (children) were present, Pichon Esquire showed off. He played one of Kalkbrenner's concertos, which did not make any great impression on the little figures, but "the Village Jew Merchant," played by the same Mr. Pichon, pleased them more.

On August 19th F. Chopin Esquire drank off seven cups of acorn coffee. It is to be expected that he will soon drink eight.

## FOREIGN NEWS

On August 20th the harvest took place at Oborov. All the folk from the countryside gathered before the manor and rejoiced heartily, especially after the whiskey, and the peasant girls sang, a semitone wrong, the following well-known song:—

" Ducks swim in mud the manor before.  
Our lady is decked in gold all o'er.

Before the manor hung a string,  
Our master is like a Turkish king.

Before the manor hangs a snake,  
A husband will soon our Miss Mary take.

Before the manor a cap is laid,  
A pretty fool is the manor housemaid."

. . . . .

Mr. Wojcicki in the same work also quotes from a manuscript of Frycek, shown to him by the Chopin family, the following description of a dance on St. Katherine's Eve. (This manuscript was a part of the work connected with the "Literary Amusement Association," conducted by "Mr. Pichon" and his sister, Emilia).

"Once I had no proper shoes when Colonel G. came to invite us for St. Katherine's Eve, as his wife's name's day came the next day. My father was not in but I ran and

found him and asked him for money to buy shoes. When I got it I ran full speed to the market. When I got there, the shoemakers' wives were elbowing each other, each of them praising her top-boots, dancing pumps and shoes. I chose a pair of shoes and in a moment, shod, I rushed home and showed them to everybody. The hour came, the time to go out for the evening; we were all dressed and we got into the carriage. The door of the room opened, Colonel G. received us and the birthday lady, very tired, was playing on the pantaleon (clavichord):—

“ Permit me, for its only due,  
And I don't get tired like you.”  
And though long she said, “ No, no ! ”  
At last she sighed and let it go.

I played a good deal, danced the cotillion and country dance. Suddenly the sound of our mazurka was heard. How quickly I rushed forward ! But in a moment I had twisted my right leg and down I went on the ground . . . My partner ran away !

“ What's happened, look I beg !  
For sure I've broken my leg ! ”  
And nobody can decide.  
“ Its a fit,” one lady cried,  
My mama was quite appalled,  
And papa was quickly called.  
Said one lady, much afraid :  
“ On the sofa he must be laid.”  
They raised me up from the floor—  
To the sofa they gently bore,  
And someone by me knelt  
And my knee all over felt.  
The dancing was stopped in haste—  
Alas for our pleasure's waste !  
A doctor in haste was sought,  
To the house was quickly brought.”

He began to anoint, to squeeze and to bandage my leg, until I clenched my teeth with pain. They brought me downstairs to the carriage and I went back home

“ Oh, long and long I lay,  
But that is over and done.  
I have sung for you, sirs, the way  
In which it was all begun.  
If it were not for what I tell  
I should be healthy and well.”

. . . . .



In the above quoted manuscripts we have all the impressions of Fryderyk Chopin's boyhood that he left us written down with his own hand. In them, as in a clear stream, his young soul was reflected—a soul that from the time it came into the world was initiated by Nature, that unfailing directness of genius—into the secrets of her wisdom and her simplicity.

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